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VOLUME XXXII

STUDIES OF PEASANT LIFE:

THE STORY OF IDA

ROADSIDE SONGS OF TUSCANY

CHRIST'S FOLK IN THE APENNINE

ULRIC THE FARM SERVANT

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La Madonnina.

STUDIES OF PEASANT LIFE:

THE STORY OF IDA
ROADSIDE SONGS OF TUSCANY
CHRIST'S FOLK IN THE APENNINE
ULRIC THE FARM SERVANT

EDITED AND ARRANGED BY

JOHN RUSKIN

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Note.—The subject of the *frontispiece* appeared in the *Magazine of Art*, 1899, p. 392; and that of Plate XXVI. in the same magazine, 1895, p. 296.

INTRODUCTION TO VOL. XXXII

This volume collects various Studies of Peasant Life which Ruskin edited and published. It comprises (I.) *The Story of Ida*, by Miss Francesca Alexander, edited, with a Preface, by Ruskin (1883). (II.) *Roadside Songs of Tuscany*, written and illustrated by Miss Alexander, and edited, with various notes, essays, and a Preface, by Ruskin (1885). To this are added, in accordance with his intention, several additional songs, and examples of the music to which the peasants sing them. (III.) *Christ's Folk in the Apennine*, again by Miss Alexander, and edited in the same way by Ruskin (1887, 1889). (IV.) *Ulric the Farm Servant*, translated by Mrs. Julia Firth, and edited, again with notes and a Preface, by Ruskin (1886–1888). In an Appendix is a report of a Lecture given by Ruskin in 1883 on Miss Alexander's work.

Though these studies belong in chronological order to the latest years of Ruskin's literary activity, the volume is connected in subject and scope with *Fors Clavigera* and *Bibliotheca Pastorum;* for the latter series, one of the books here included[1] was, indeed, originally intended. "Farm after farm I can show you," said Ruskin in *Fors Clavigera*, "in Bavaria, Switzerland, the Tyrol, and such other places, where men and women are perfectly happy and good without any iron servants."[2] In the studies collected in this volume, describing peasant life in the hill country of Italy and in the Swiss lowlands, the examples, thus promised, are given. The connexion in Ruskin's mind between Miss Alexander's songs and stories of Tuscan and Venetian peasants, on the one hand, and the Swiss tales of Gotthelf, on the other, is indicated in his Preface to *Ulric*, where he says that "having been enabled to lay before the English reader, in Miss Alexander's *Songs of Tuscany*, the truth of Italian peasant character animated by sincere Catholic religion," he found it his "next most instant duty to place in parallel light the more calculating and prosperous virtue of Protestant Switzerland" (p. 343). The volume is thus a collection of the simple annals and sincere faith of those peasant-races in whose "voiceless religion and uncomplaining duty" is to be found, as we are told

[1] Namely, *Ulric:* see below, p. xxxiii.
[2] Letter 5 (Vol. XXVII. p. 88).

in *Fors*,[1] "that Church on earth, against which the gates of Hell shall not prevail."

From another point of view, the present volume may be described as a contribution made under Ruskin's editorship to the History of Modern Europe. He cared little for the history of kings and conquests,[2] though, indeed, as we have seen, he was a student of military history.[3] He believed that the importance of political history was often exaggerated, and he suspected the sweeping generalizations of "histories of civilization." "Write first," he said, "the history of your native village."[4] In Miss Alexander's studies of her village-friends, in the hill-country of Tuscany and the Veneto, and in the no less faithful fiction of Gotthelf, Ruskin found "some part of what is exactly true in the greatest of the sciences, that of Humanity," and thus real contributions to "domestic history"[5]—the history of the "innocent and invincible peasant life," which tells of the two powers, often ignored by writers of "loftier pretence"—the providence of Heaven and the virtue of men. By such history—showing "under all sorrow, the force of virtue; over all ruin, the restoring charity of God"—we may best "understand the past, and predict the future."[6]

The volume has a further interest as introducing the reader to artistic work which Ruskin intensely admired, finding in it, among other qualities, that "Pre-Raphaelite" truth for which he sought alike in drawing and in writing. Miss Alexander's work enabled him, as he said of *The Story of Ida*,[7] "to show in the same book examples of the purest truth, both in history, and picture" (p. 6).

I

Of the Contents enumerated above, the first three and the Appendix are concerned with the work of Miss Francesca Alexander, of whom some account may here be given. Miss Alexander is the daughter of the late Mr. Francis Alexander, an artist from Boston, U.S.A., who settled in Florence and was a successful portrait-painter. He was a devoted worshipper of beauty in simple nature. "I have never known any one," writes his daughter to Ruskin, "except you and him, who looked at plants just in that way" (p. 312); and she grew up in

[1] Letter 84 (Vol. XXIX. p. 288).
[2] Compare Vol. XVI. pp. lxviii., 452; Vol. XXII. pp. 269–270.
[3] Vol. XXXI. p. 477.
[4] See Vol. XXII. p. 500. Compare (in a later volume of this edition) one of Ruskin's letters to Mr. Malleson.
[5] Preface to *The Story of Ida;* below, p. 5.
[6] *Bible of Amiens*, ch. i. § 19, ch. ii. § 15 (Vol. XXXIII.).
[7] And compare what he says in the Preface to *Christ's Folk*, p. 255.

an atmosphere of art. "She began to draw almost as soon as she could speak; and she was kept constantly supplied with materials and surrounded by the fine pictures which constituted what Mr. Alexander called his library. As a child she was always composing stories in rhyme or prose, and illustrating them with drawings."[1] Her talent attracted the notice of American travellers, as may be seen from a passage in Motley's letters (1855):—

"She draws entirely with pen and ink, composing out of her own imagination or from recollection.[2] But her facility and grace and purity of style are unequalled by any modern drawings which I ever saw. Miss Alexander has not tried her hand at painting yet, although she believes herself to have more feeling for colour than for any other department of art. She draws outlines, human figures, Madonnas, peasant-girls, saints in endless variety, and illustrates old Italian songs, of which she furnishes herself very pretty translations. She is a young person of unquestionable genius, and as simple and unaffected as she is clever."[3]

And also, as every reader of the present volume will discover, as kind as clever. The origin of *The Roadside Songs of Tuscany* may be traced back, says Mr. Spielmann, "to her earliest years, almost to her infancy, and to a disposition for wide philanthropy and truest charity which has always been distinctive of her family. One Sunday, when she was still a child, she had, the story runs, been to church at Bellosguardo, and had been struck by an old man's quaintly simple prayer that God should help the poor and sick 'because there were so many of them.' A little later, as Christmas time came round, a charitable American lady desired, in pursuance of her practice at that season, to bestow alms among the deserving poor; but being a stranger in Florence, she was forced to seek for trustworthy indications. These were quickly forthcoming; and to 'Francesca,' to her boundless satisfaction, was entrusted a bagful of 'Francesconi' for distribution among the poor of the church. She forthwith made a little book of some score of sheets of note-paper, in which she gave a short account of the pensioners one by one, with a little drawing illustrating the sad story of each; and the American lady carried it away with her, well satisfied with the prize that had rewarded her charity, which she thereupon redoubled. Arrived in Paris, the lady showed it to other American friends, who, pleased at the story, sent a large sum to the charity-loving child; and

[1] "Francesca Alexander, and *The Roadside Songs of Tuscany*," by M. H. Spielmann, in the *Magazine of Art*, June 1895, p. 295.

[2] I do not know if this was correct at the time; it certainly does not apply to Miss Alexander's later practice.

[3] *Correspondence of John Lothrop Motley*, edited by G. W. Curtis, 1889, vol. i. p. 182.

the charity-loving child could do no less than make a book for them; and so much did she enjoy her work and the use she put it to that she always liked to be similarly employed."[1]

As her art improved, so did her passion to exercise it increase. She did not, however, as Mr. Motley anticipated, take to colour, but concentrated her skill upon black and white; nor did she "draw out of her own imagination": she found her models among the peasant-folk whom she made her friends. An American visitor to her rooms in the Piazza di Santa Maria Novella gives a pretty glimpse of the artist at work:—

"The floor of the little studio is tiled with red brick, like the courtyard below; the walls are hung with bits of Medici tapestry and three early Renaissance paintings—a Virgin and Child, a Crucifixion, and a Pietà. One corner is sacred to the memory of Ida; but the chief decoration of the room was the flowers—huge Tuscan jars of blue and yellow ware filled with anemones, tulips, violets, and a spray of almond blossom—these were all gifts from the artist's models, the pretty soft-eyed Tuscan girls, who gathered them in the mountain fastnesses, or over yonder in the blue Val d'Arno. 'They are the best and purest creatures in the world,' said Miss Alexander, 'the simplest and most grateful, and they have a reverence for holy things which is wonderful.' In a few minutes there was a gentle tap at the door, and a girl entered. She was a slight, spiritual thing, with a delicate face, and the Tuscan heritage—large, luminous eyes. She held a *bambino* in her arms—a rosy boy, half-naked and fast asleep. At a sign from Miss Alexander, she laid the child on a light-coloured rug; and, while Miss Alexander sketched, the girl knelt down beside the child, and, with an utter ignoring of our presence, began to sing in a low, sweet voice, 'Mira, cuor mio durissimo.'"[2]

It is in such surroundings that Miss Alexander produced her principal work, the *Roadside Songs*, or, as she herself had called the book, *Tuscan Songs*. Ever since she had come to Florence, she had collected street-ballads and old song-books. From her friends among the peasantry she learnt many others, which passed from mouth to mouth and generation to generation. She wrote down the Italian words and also the tunes as she heard them sung in olive-wood or by fountain. From the treasures thus collected, she made a selection, which she translated into English and illustrated with portraits, subject-pictures, views, and floral designs. Plates VI. and VII. give a good idea of her characteristic intermingling of pictures and writing. She had no thought of publishing,

[1] *Magazine of Art* (as quoted above), pp. 296–297.

[2] *Pall Mall Gazette*, May 13, 1887, from the New York *Critic*. For the song, see below, p. 199.

but she intended to sell the manuscript book, as she had already sold others of the kind, for the benefit of the poor to whom she ministered as friend to friend. The book found many admirers, among others Lord Leighton, who had urged its publication. This, however, was reserved for another admirer, to whom the book, alike in its art and in its words, appealed yet more strongly.

It was at Florence in October 1882 that Ruskin made the acquaintance of Mrs. and Miss Francesca Alexander. He was introduced by their countryman, Mr. H. R. Newman, of whom we have already heard.[1] Miss Alexander showed Ruskin some of her books and drawings, and first among them *The Story of Ida*,[2] which he bought and obtained her permission to publish. With the money, Miss Alexander made gifts to some of her peasant-friends, who thus became interested in Ruskin.[3] Then the book of *Tuscan Songs* was shown, and he was charmed with it. He declared its value to be £1000; but Miss Alexander's father had fixed the price at £600, and she would take for it neither more nor less. On the next day he despatched the following letter:—

"Florence, *7th Oct.*, '82.

"Dear Mrs. Alexander,—I've taken a new pen—it is all I can!—I wish I could learn an entirely new writing from some pretty hem of an angel's robe—to tell you with what happy and *reverent* admiration I saw your daughter's drawings yesterday; reverent not only of a quite heavenly gift of genius in a kind I had never before seen, but also of the entirely sweet and loving spirit which animated and sanctified the work, and the serenity which it expressed in the purest faiths and best purposes of life.—(It thunders as I write, as if all the fiends of the air were trying to hinder me from saying what is in my heart.)—In absolute skill of drawing, and perception of all that is loveliest in human creatures, and in the flowers that live for them, I think these works are in their kind unrivalled, and that they do indeed represent certain elements of feeling and power peculiar to this age in which we are entering on new dispensations of thought and hope; good for *me* to see especially, because I have hitherto been brought into collision with all its evil, and have been much cast out from the knowledge of its good.

"The earlier thunder of the morning kept me awake, to some good purpose, for it gave me time to think over all these things, in their relation to my work in England; and I came to the conclusion, that I might, for the service of the English peasantry, be

[1] See Vol. XXX. pp. lxxiii., lxxiv.

[2] The author's own title was *The True Story of Ida; written by her Friend.* The title suggested by Ruskin on the first proofs was *The Maid of Fésole.*

[3] See below, pp. 307, 324

mean enough to take Miss Alexander at her frank word as to the price of the book. I will give six hundred guineas for it with more than pleasure, if at that price I may be permitted to place it in the St. George's Museum; but in order to its perfect usefulness there, I am going to pray Miss Alexander to write, by way of introduction to it, such brief sketches as she may find easy of arrangement, of the real people whose portraits are given. What you and she told me in the little time of looking over it, would be almost enough; but one of my chief objects in obtaining the book will be the conveying to the mind of our English peasantry (not to say princes) some sympathetic conception of the reality of the sweet soul of Catholic Italy.

"I am going to ask Mr. Newman to intercede with you and Miss Alexander for me in all *these* matters. One more quite personal favour—I scarcely like to ask, but yet still venture—that I might see Miss Alexander draw a little bit of a flower. I have really no conception how that work can be done, and I am the more personally interested in it, because it is the glorification and perfection of a method once recommended in my *Elements of Drawing*,[1] and afterwards rejected as too difficult.

"If this might be—or, indeed, whether it may be or not!—I trust to be permitted to wait upon you both once more before leaving Florence. Mr. Newman will tell me your pleasure and your time; and so I remain, my dear Mrs. (and Miss) Alexander,

"Your grateful and faithful servant,

"JOHN RUSKIN."

On these terms the purchase was made, and there are references in *Roadside Songs* to the way in which the money was spent, in relieving the hardships of the peasant-folk.[2] The book passed into Ruskin's possession, with permission to do with it as he willed. "Well pleased with myself," he writes in his diary (October 10), "for having bought Miss Alexander's book, showing all I want to say about Italian peasantry." He was equally pleased with himself for having won the friendship of the artist and her mother. "I never knew such vivid goodness and innocence in any living creatures," he wrote in his diary next day, "as in this Mrs. and Miss Alexander." The friendship ripened into affectionate sympathy, and his correspondence with Miss Alexander and her mother was one of the pleasures and consolations of Ruskin's later years. We have heard, in the terminal letter of *Fors Clavigera*, how much he owed to Miss Alexander's friendship,[3] and the

[1] If it was Miss Alexander's water-colour drawing that Ruskin sought to see, the reference may be to § 175 (Vol. XV. p. 153).

[2] See below, p. 133.

[3] See Vol. XXIX. pp. 527-528.

little book, called *Christ's Folk in the Apennine*, is a selection from her almost daily letters.

Ruskin returned to England at the end of 1882 in a state of enthusiasm over his new treasures; and on resuming the Professorship at Oxford, made the exposition of Miss Alexander's art one of his principal objects. In his first lecture on *The Art of England* (March 1883) he gave some account of her life and work, showed the drawing of Ida on her deathbed, and promised the publication of Ida's story. This book was published in May 1883, and, as will be seen from the Bibliographical Note, the simple and touching story of real life has enjoyed a wide popularity. Ruskin had sent a copy of the little book to his friend, Cardinal Manning, whose letter of acknowledgment has recently been published:—

"It is simply beautiful, like the *Fioretti di San Francesco*. Such flowers can grow in one soil alone. They can be found only in the Garden of Faith, over which the world of light hangs visibly, and is more intensely seen by the poor and pure in heart than by the rich, or the learned, or the men of culture."[1]

In the third of his Oxford lectures[2] (May 1883), Ruskin read passages from Miss Alexander's preface to the *Roadside Songs*, and showed some of the drawings from it, dwelling especially on those of St. Christopher. In June he gave a drawing-room lecture in London, in which he showed twenty of the drawings, referring to them as "fine gold which has been strangely trusted to me, and which, before, was a treasure hid in a mountain field in Tuscany." Lowell, Matthew Arnold, Leighton, Burne-Jones, and Miss Jean Ingelow were among Ruskin's audience on this occasion. Also, R. H. Hutton, editor of the *Spectator*. A report of this lecture is reprinted from that paper in an Appendix to the present volume (p. 535).

The questions next arose with Ruskin how to make the drawings themselves most serviceable, and in what form to introduce them, and the songs which they illustrated, to the general public. His original idea was to place the book in its entirety at Sheffield; but this unhappily was not done. The book, when Ruskin bought it, consisted, he tells us (p. 51), of 109 folio leaves, on every one of which there was a drawing either of figures, or flowers, or both.[3] He dispersed the leaves widely;

[1] Printed on p. ix. of Miss Alexander's *The Hidden Servants* (1900): see below, p. xxxi.

[2] See § 84 (Vol. XXXIII.), and for later references to Miss Alexander in the same lectures, §§ 147, 210.

[3] The actual number was 122. Ruskin did not include the full-page drawings and some of the preliminary pages in this numbering: see below, p. 47.

but some years afterwards, Mrs. Alexander, "desirous that her daughter's work should be saved in its complete original form, as far as possible, traced with the help of Ruskin and Mrs. Severn the whereabouts of nearly all the leaves; and having them re-photographed, caused a couple of facsimile volumes to be executed, in which Francesca's work stands alone, as it was designed to be, without any notes other than its own beauty and grace."[1] In 1897 the book was published in America in this form, each leaf of the original book being reproduced on a separate plate. The number of such plates, including frontispiece, half-title, preface, and index (all decorated by the artist), is 108, 14 leaves being missing. Full particulars on this subject, with the present whereabouts of the drawings (so far as known) are given in the Bibliographical Note (pp. 44–48). Ruskin acted on his usual principle of dispersing his treasures, and deciding their fate for immediate and widespread use, with little consideration for the integrity of a collection.

In publishing his selections from the book, he chose twenty of the leaves for photographic reproduction. These were in his edition of the *Roadside Songs* photographed by Mr. Hollyer, and platinotype prints were pasted on to pages and issued with the text. In the present edition the twenty subjects, thus given by Ruskin, have been rendered by photogravure process. With regard to the letterpress, Ruskin printed only a portion of Miss Alexander's *Tuscan Songs;* full particulars in this matter will be found in the Bibliographical Note (pp. 44–48). But he obtained from her much additional matter not included in her original book. The most important of these additions are explained in § 4 of his Preface (p. 54); they consist of Miss Alexander's "biographic sketches," such as Ruskin had asked for in his letter to Mrs. Alexander, "of the real lives and characters of the peasants whom she had taken for her principal models." He also requested her to tell the Story of St. Christopher in prose, to take the place of the ballad in the original book. There are also some Rispetti in *Roadside Songs* which do not appear in the American edition. Some of these were certainly supplementary to the original book;[2] others may have been on its now missing leaves.

In this form, then, Ruskin issued the *Roadside Songs* in twelve numbers at various dates during the years 1884 and 1885. He added, on his own part, a Preface, and several essays of much interest, together with occasional notes on the drawings. The book, with some slight rearrangements—explained in the Bibliographical Note (p. 43)—is here

[1] *Magazine of Art*, June 1895, p. 298.
[2] See below, p. 48.

reprinted in its original form; but several additions have been made. Ruskin in his Preface (p. 51) expressed the intention of "printing separately all the music, and the little short songs called Rispetti." This intention he did not carry out. In the present volume all the Rispetti in Miss Alexander's MS. book which were not included in Ruskin's *Roadside Songs* have been added, and numerous specimens of the music have also been incorporated. Two hymns (referred to in Ruskin's book) have also been added, and a terminal Index to the First Lines of the songs, etc., has been appended (p. 248).

The *text* has been collated with Miss Alexander's original script, and this has led to the correction of several misprints and of other errors. Full particulars on all these matters will be found in the Bibliographical Note (pp. 44–48).

Many of the peasants mentioned in *Roadside Songs* meet us again in *Christ's Folk*. The Index, which Ruskin partly compiled for the latter book, has, therefore, now been extended to the former also (pp. 335, 336).

The third of Miss Alexander's books published and edited by Ruskin was called by him *Christ's Folk in the Apennine*. This book, which consists, as already stated, of selections from Miss Alexander's letters to Ruskin, was issued in parts during the years 1887–1889. It is here printed (pp. 249–333) in the form given to it in the revised and collected edition of 1901.[1]

The three books, of which the history has thus been given, form a connected whole, being a collection of studies of the lives, characters, songs, legends, and traditions of the North Italian peasantry of to-day, called generically by Ruskin "Christ's Folk in the Apennine"—"the Apennine" standing, as he explains (p. 271 *n.*), for the mountain-country of Italy generally. The country near Florence is indeed the scene of most of Miss Alexander's tales of real life; it is "earth-work out of Tuscany," to borrow the title of a more casual labourer in the same field, that she collects. Her friends were made partly in Florence itself, but principally at her summer quarters in the Tuscan Apennine —in the mountainous country north of Pistoia and Lucca, generally called by the Italians *l'Appennino Pistoiese*. It is approached either from Pracchia, a station on the Bologna-Pistoia-Florence line; or, from the west, by Lucca. Above the Baths of Lucca—a region

[1] It appears that Miss Kate Greenaway designed a cover for "The Peace of Polissena," the first Part of *Christ's Folk*, but it was not used; see M. H. Spielmann and G. S. Layard's *Kate Greenaway*, p. 170.

beloved by Shelley and Browning—the valley of the Lima ascends to S. Marcello, and thence more precipitously past Cutigliano and Pian Sinatico to l'Abetone (or, as it is now styled from its pinewoods, Boscolungo)—Abetone, the poetic, as Alfieri calls it—on the ridge of the pass which leads through Fiumalbo to Modena. The country is celebrated for its literary associations, and the purity of the Tuscan tongue which may there be heard. A Florentine scholar, in whose company I chanced to be the other day, had many a story to tell of the lessons in Tuscan which even learned professors may receive from wayside conversation in the Pistoiese Apennines with the country-folk, who in repeating a stranger's question will quietly correct his words or accent. In honour of the fifth centenary of Boccaccio, a volume was published at Leghorn containing one of the stories of the *Decameron* translated into some seven hundred different dialects or shades of dialect. "The one that most faithfully resembles the pure Tuscan of Boccaccio's day is that representing the peasant language of the Pistoiese Apennines. It is here, round about San Marcello and Cutigliano, that the purest Tuscan is spoken, pure in its language, pure in its accent; and it is here that Manzoni and d'Azeglio came, comparative foreigners both of them—the one a Lombard, the other a Piedmontese—to acquire the pure language for those romances which have delighted all Italy and all the world."[1] This is the region to which most of Miss Alexander's tales take us. It was from Pian degli Ontani, a mile's walk near Cutigliano, that Beatrice came, who taught Miss Alexander many of the Tuscan songs.

This peasant-woman was a celebrated *improvisatrice;* mention of her will be found in the appendix to Ouida's "photographic story" (as Ruskin calls it),[2] of *A Village Commune.*[3] Beatrice was already famous

[1] *In Tuscany,* by Montgomery Carmichael, 1901, p. 102.

[2] *Art of England,* § 25.

[3] "In a letter published in 1859 to the celebrated Tommaseo, Professore Giuliani narrates the story of a woman called Beatrice in the Pistoiese Apennines—a woman he knew well—a poor, hard-working, country-bred creature, who knew not a single letter of the alphabet, but who improvised on the death of a beloved son, in a passion of grief and weeping, the most perfect poem in the always difficult *ottave.* This woman was but one amidst others, who all had, in a greater or a lesser degree, this grand poetical faculty, and harmony of ear, and who, when asked to teach their power to a stranger, would answer, with a smile:

"'Volete intender lo mio imparare!
Andar per legna, or starmene a zappare'"

(p. 369). Ouida quotes a different version of the lines given by Francesca on p. 130, below. See also the Introduction (p. xvii.) to *Spanish and Italian Folk-Songs,* translated by Alma Strettell, 1887 (illustrated by John S. Sargent, Edwin Abbey, and other artists). The letter from Professor Giuliani to N. Tommaseo, referred to by Ouida, appeared in the *Istitutore* of Turin, Nos. 23 to 28, 1859.

in 1841 when Tommaseo published his standard work on Folk-Songs in the Italian tongue;[1] and her powers of improvisation are again noticed in the later collection of Tigri.[2] Miss Alexander introduces us also to another, and yet more celebrated, *improvisatrice*—Giannina Milli—and describes "Giannina singing to Beatrice."[3] Many of the songs given by Miss Alexander are to be found also in Tigri's collection; though, as is naturally the case with folk-poetry, there is no certainty about the text. Where there is difference between Miss Alexander's and that of Tigri, hers is to be preferred as giving what the peasants themselves sang to her. The same idea, or the same first line, is often taken as the starting-point for many variations. The reader is referred in occasional footnotes to the same, or similar, songs in Tigri's collection. Most of the hymns in the volume come, as Miss Alexander says, from an old collection of the eighteenth century;[4] the ballads are sometimes taken from broad-sheets; for the rest, Miss Alexander's collection is of "Roadside Songs," not elsewhere to be found in print, and her collection is thus an important contribution to the folk-poetry of Italy. Ruskin in his Preface (pp. 55–56) makes some interesting remarks on analogies between some of Miss Alexander's ballads and Greek epic verse. It may be added that others of them occasionally recall Greek lyrics. Take this, for instance, from the Greek Anthology:—

> "Why should little things be blamed?
> Little things for grace are famed.
> Love, the winged and the wild,
> Love is but a little child."[5]

The lines may be compared with one of the *rispetti* in this volume, translated below (p. 237):—

> "Le cose piccoline son pur belle,
> Le cose piccoline son pur care," etc.

The same idea occurs in a Venetian song:—

> "Tute le cose piccole xè belle,
> Chi no me crede a mi, varda le stele."

[1] *Canti Popolari, Toscani, Corsi, Illirici, Greci, Raccolti e illustrati* da N. Tommaseo: Venice, 4 vols., 1841. The notice of Beatrice is on pp. 5, 6 of vol. i.

[2] *Canti Popolari Toscani, Raccolti e annotati* da Giuseppe Tigri: Florence, 1869 (3rd ed.).

[3] The title of a chapter in *Christ's Folk:* see below, where on p. 330 *n.* references to Giannina's poetical works are given.

[4] *Corona di Sacre Canzoni:* see below, p. 197 *n.*

[5] Translated by T. P. Rogers.

Perhaps it is in Venice that a foreigner may most readily come into touch with that innate poetry of the Italian folk which finds expression in such songs as Miss Alexander collects. A gondolier, if you are once on friendly terms with him, will speak to you, as the shadows fall, not of the stars, but of the "beautiful secrets"; or, he will be silent, and if you ask him why, will tell you that "night is the mother of thoughts."[1]

But Miss Alexander's book is more than a collection of folk-songs. "If you would learn to sing like me," writes Ouida, in expanding Beatrice's song (p. 130), "come with me to gather the hillside wood, or stay beside me to hoe the earth; this rich and kindly earth which flowers for ever for you, making the almond bloom in the winter cold, and the cyclamen in the autumn mists, and all spring and summer shower on you blossoms with both hands." Miss Alexander has lived amongst the peasants on their hillsides, and tells us, in language of touching simplicity, their lives, their thoughts, their beliefs, which colour the songs. Angelo, the literally "singing mason"[2]—inspired alike in his building and his poetry, who finds his work so beautiful that he is always sorry when night falls, and sings, as he works, of Orpheus and Eurydice—works at l'Abetone. His house, with the niche which he built for the Madonna over its door, may still perhaps be seen there; I cannot say; for the place has been much changed since it became fashionable quarters for *la villeggiatura*, and it is of these little towns in earlier days that Miss Alexander writes.[3] It was up the steep ascent from Cutigliano to l'Abetone that Polissena drove her horses *trapelo*, and found peace in tending them, "for horses know, just the same as Christians, when people are good to them." Beppe, another son of Beatrice, and like her an *improvisatore*, was a charcoal-burner. On the mountain side over the course of the Lima lived Assunta with her donkey; and among the same peasantry, Miss Alexander found her Santa Zitas and Samaritan Women in real life. Sometimes, however, we are taken from Tuscany to the Veneto; to Venice itself, where Francesca's faithful Edwige accompanied her; to Bassano, where is the orphanage described in the last Letter of *Fors Clavigera*; and to Asiago and the rest of the Sette Comuni. Hard and pinching is the lot of these "Christ's Folk," alike in the Tuscan

[1] There is an interesting chapter on the popular poetry of Venice in Mr. H. F. Brown's *Life on the Lagoons*. The song, above referred to, will be found there translated (p. 283, 1st ed.).

[2] *Henry V.*, Act i. sc. 2, line 153, quoted by Ruskin in Vol. XXVIII. p. 280.

[3] See, for instance, her descriptions of l'Abetone (pp. 151, 156), of Cutigliano (p. 157), of S. Marcello (p. 230). The tourist who seeks summer-quarters in this region will find detailed information in Emilio Bertini's pocket-guide, entitled *Le Dimore estive dell' Appennino Toscano: Notizie e indicazioni utili* (second ed., Florence, 1896).

Apennine and in the Veneto; shovelling the snow on the government roads, gathering chestnuts, or picking mushrooms; and the passing traveller is apt to pity and to pass on. But Francesca, having (as Ruskin describes) "lived among them, under their olive avenues in summer—receiving them, as they choose to come to chat with her, in her little room by Santa Maria Novella in Florence during winter," knows their life with an intimacy shared by few persons of another race and religion. To her they come as to "their loving guide, and friend, and sister in all their work, and pleasure, and suffering."[1] Her account of their hard life—of Lucia's, for instance, that almost of a beast of burden—will indeed deepen the pity in every sympathetic heart: and who will not feel how much is told in the story of the hair-merchant who buys up the hair of the women and girls, in exchange for cotton handkerchiefs? But Francesca sees beneath the outward misery the soul of goodness and the unfailing cheerfulness which shine all the more brightly through the darkness of circumstance. She tells us of Edwige, the devoted wife, mother, and servant, whose faithfulness and love burnt with an ever brighter flame at each added burden of sorrow and hardship, and whose shrewd wit plays brightly on many a page of this volume; of Isabella, the road-minder, eking out a poor pittance by incessant toil, and yet "one of the very happiest people whom I ever knew"; of Catina, the tavern-keeper, and her ministry to the poor; of Armida, the little mushroom and strawberry gatherer, who "sang all the way" and denied herself a daily dinner for her mother's sake; of old Domenico Seghi, the farmer, whose only grievance was that his children objected to his dancing; of Faustina, the dress-maker, who talked in song, and tended the sick; of Pietro, the stone-mason, who planted a garden of sweet-scented flowers for his wife when she was stricken with blindness; and of many another character among "Christ's folk," revealing (as Ruskin says) "all that is serviceablest in earthly sorrow, sacredest in mortal sorrow, and purest in the religion which has alike known and visited the affliction of the fatherless and the widow, and kept itself—as the very clouds of morning—unspotted from the world" (p. 175).

Every reader of this volume will perceive at once how strongly Miss Alexander's studies of peasant-life must have appealed to Ruskin. The simple faith of "Christ's Folk," the openness of their souls to the appeals of religious art; the living examples which they give of the dignity of labour, of the happiness of work well done, of faithfulness in service: these things made Miss Alexander's record contain for him, as he wrote, "all he wanted to say about Italian peasantry."[2]

[1] *Art of England*, § 24 (Vol. XXXIII.).
[2] See above, p. xxii.

Miss Alexander's pen-and-ink drawings contained, if not all that he wanted to say about modern art and its possibilities, yet many of the qualities which he prized most highly. The drawings, as here presented, must be taken with a double allowance—owing partly to the necessary imperfections of reproduction, and partly to the deliberate restrictions of the artist's method. Any reader who examines the pages of Miss Alexander's book, which may be seen at Oxford and Sheffield, will understand how much is necessarily lost, in work so delicate and minute, by reduction to the size of the pages in this edition. It must be added that Miss Alexander unfortunately worked with an ink which has proved very far from durable; some, indeed, of her drawings are already but pale shadows of their first selves. It is to be hoped that possessors of her drawings will be careful not to expose them continuously to the light. The utmost pains have been taken to do justice in this edition to the artist's work, and the process of photogravure has yielded in many cases admirable results.

The limitations in the artist's method and talent are pointed out by Ruskin himself. "There are often slight errors in gesture or position" (p. 127); "her figures are wanting in general ease of action"; she seems to have no care—in some sort no power—to give the sway and strength of the moving figure, under ordinary conditions of merely physical action; so that when there is no emotion guiding their gesture, her figures are often stiff—sometimes ill drawn" (p. 222). I think it will be generally felt that these remarks apply with particular force to the artist's male figures. In the figure of Santa Zita, added in this edition (Plate V.), there is naturalness as well as grace. It should be noted, further, that a certain unreality is given to some of the drawings by the artist's "carelessness of light and shade" (p. 127).[1] What Ruskin praises as especially excellent in Miss Alexander's figures is her "power of giving expression by gesture" (p. 222); "in faithful expression of human feeling"—of constant states, as well as passing emotions—"there has nothing yet, that I know of, been done like them" (p. 109). This is the opinion also of an Italian artist, who said that "Miss Alexander could express the soul in the face at which most other artists aim"; and it explains the saying of our own Watts that "he would rather have drawn the face of the 'Madonnina' than almost any work he had ever done."[2] "Miss Alexander's work seemed to him to be far the most real thing that he knew, so sincere and true to the

[1] Compare p. 52.

[2] *Magazine of Art*, as cited above, p. 298. The drawing of the Madonnina is the frontispiece to this volume.

producer's feeling that every defect is compensated for, and Watts put the result, therefore, where Ruskin did."[1]

To Ruskin the drawings had an historical interest, second only to the artistic. Miss Alexander's saints were drawn not from professional models, idealised, but from her peasant-friends. Santa Zita was a road-minder, near l'Abetone; the Madonna ran about barefoot on a farm; the Woman of Samaria worked on the road, clearing the snow; Saint Christopher was a stone-mason.[2] The Christ alone was drawn without a model (p. 190). And finally, as the figures were likenesses of the country-people in their everyday clothes and with their everyday surroundings, so, says Miss Alexander, "it seemed natural that roadside songs should have borders of roadside flowers" (p. 58). The portraits of the flowers are as lovingly drawn as those of the peasants, and perhaps with more complete success. "Since Leonardo da Vinci's flower-studies, we can recall," said a writer in the *Spectator*,[3] "no drawings of the 'herb of the field' equal to 'Francesca's' for strength and delicacy, for truth and the reverence that comes of truth."

Miss Alexander at a later time made a new series of drawings for Ruskin, in which other of her peasant-models were used to illustrate legends of the saints.[4] One of these—"Santa Rosa"—which is referred to in *Christ's Folk* and has been published elsewhere—is included in the present volume. In later years the artist's eyesight has failed her for delicate draughtsmanship; and this deprivation was the cause of a further collection of Tuscan Stories, published in America in 1900: namely,

> *The Hidden Servants, and other very old Stories, told over again by Francesca Alexander. With an introduction by Anna Fuller.* Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1900.[5]

The stories are told in rhyme, and the title of the first, which gives its name to the book, connects itself with some references by Miss Alexander in the present volume.[6] "I never had time to write them down," writes Miss Alexander with regard to her later collection of ballads, "as long as my eyes permitted me to work at my drawing, and afterwards when I wanted to begin them, I found myself unable to

[1] *Reminiscences of G. F. Watts*, by Mrs. Russell Barrington, 1905, p. 15.

[2] For an index to the passages in which Miss Alexander identifies her models, see p. 55 *n.*

[3] See below, p. 537.

[4] See below, p. 279.

[5] There has also been published a prose collection of lives of various saints by her mother—*Il Libro d' Oro of those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life*, translations by Mrs. Francis Alexander, 1905.

[6] See pp. 229, 304.

write at all for more than a few minutes at once. Finally I thought of turning the stories into rhyme and learning them all by heart, so that I could write them down little by little. I thought children would not be very particular, if I could just make the dear old stories vivid and comprehensible, which I tried to do. If, as you kindly hope, they may be good for older people as well, then it must be that when the Lord took from me one faculty He gave me another; which is in no way impossible. And I think of the beautiful Italian proverb: 'When God shuts a door He opens a window.'" Of the story-teller and her child-friends, we are given a glimpse in Miss Alexander's rhyming preface:—

"But my life, to evening grown,
Still has pleasures of its own.
Up my stairway, long and steep,
Now and then the children creep;
Gather round me, where I sit
All day long, and dream, and knit;
Fill my room with happy noise—
May God bless them, girls and boys!
Then sweet eyes upon me shine,
Dimpled hands are laid in mine;
And I never ask them why
They have sought to climb so high;
For 'twere useless to enquire!
'Tis a story they desire
Taken from my ancient store,
None the worse if heard before."

II

From the gracious teller and illustrator of Tuscan songs and stories, giving us "the truth of Italian peasant character animated by sincere Catholic religion," we pass in this volume to what Ruskin calls "the more calculating and prosperous virtue of Protestant Switzerland" (p. 343).

The Swiss tales of Gotthelf had long been favourites with Ruskin. They appeared in the 'fifties, at the time when Ruskin with his father and mother was often in Switzerland, and they formed part of their travelling library. In writing to his mother, in a later year, Ruskin says (July 2, 1866): "We dined at Fribourg to-day in our old corner room where my father read *Ulric the Farmer* to us, and where I drew in the inner little closet." That was probably in 1854.[1] The

[1] See Vol. V. pp. xxxi. *n.*, xxxii.

pictures drawn by Gotthelf were of the Swiss lowlands, as Ruskin knew them in the old days—"the sweet, quiet, half-wild, kindly and calmly inhabited Bernese lowlands" (p. 499 *n.*), in the days before the railroads. It was in the Emmenthal that Gotthelf lived and worked, among those "pastoral hills" whose pines and cottages are described by Ruskin,[1] and which enfolded the pastoral life that was to him "the soul of the Alps."[2] In the fourth volume of *Modern Painters* (1856) Gotthelf is mentioned as the "principal writer" who "with deep love and stern penetration" has painted the Swiss peasantry as they then were, "and I believe we shall not easily find a peasantry which would completely sustain comparison with them."[3] In the fifth volume (1860),[4] the writings of Gotthelf are again referred to in illustrating "the degree of nobleness and refinement which may be attained in servile or in rural life," and as containing "a record of Swiss character not less valuable in its fine truth than that which Scott has left of the Scottish."

In *Fors Clavigera*, as we have seen, Ruskin referred frequently to Gotthelf and translated one of his shorter pieces.[5] In his *Notes* on the Bond Street Exhibition of 1878, Ruskin quoted from another of the same author's books, *L'Ame et l'Argent*.[6] It had long been his desire to issue an English translation of the larger and more important story of *Ulric*. In Letter 61 of *Fors* (January 1876) he promised "to make it soon one of my school series"; it was to be the second volume in *Bibliotheca Pastorum*.[7] At that time Ruskin hoped that Carlyle's niece, Miss Aitken, would make the translation for him, but, as here related (p. 344), she abandoned the task. Ten years later, Ruskin's friend (and neighbour in the Lake country), Mrs. Julia Firth of Ambleside, undertook for him the translation of *Ulric* from the original German, and he published it in parts, with a Preface, some curtailment,[8] and notes, during the years 1886, 1887, and 1888. It is here reprinted (pp. 337–532) in continuous form. Ruskin took a close interest in the work of its translation. "I looked at a little bit of *Ulric* last night," he wrote to Mrs. Firth; "it is delightful that you have got it into this useful form; but I don't think it possible to translate quite spiritedly at the *rate* you have worked. I hold it quite as difficult to do good translation of so fine an original as to write good verses. One

[1] *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. vi. ch. ix. § 10 (Vol. VII. p. 109).
[2] Vol. XIII. p. 494.
[3] Vol. VI. p. 172.
[4] Vol. VII. pp. 429–430.
[5] See Vol. XXVII. p. xli., and the references there given.
[6] Vol. XIII. pp. 491–494.
[7] Vol. XXVIII. pp. 492, 499.
[8] See pp. 392, 483, 517.

can't do more than so many a day." "This translation," he wrote of another instalment, "is much nearer the mark, but you must be ever so much more literal—or else totally and fearlessly divergent. We'll have a talk over it." The talks must often have disclosed some difficulty, for Ruskin knew the book only at second-hand in its French translation, and insisted (as he wrote in the first draft of his Preface) "on my Frankish instead of Mrs. Firth's Allemannic view of a sentence."[1] Felicities or *nuances* of expression noted by Ruskin were sometimes, as we have seen in the extracts from Gotthelf in *Fors*,[2] due to the French translation. Ruskin does not claim for *Ulric* that it is never tiresome, and he exercised his editorial discretion by occasional curtailments. At first he was "getting desperately interested in *Ulric* myself as I correct press" (May 21, 1885); and "every day I feel more and more the need of him for reference." But as the story continued, his interest sometimes flagged. "I'm always provoked with Ulric," he wrote, on receiving the fifth part (March 12, 1887), "for taking up with Elisi. He ought to have been caught by a cleverer girl, who would have given Freneli some trouble—the story is spoiled by his being such a simpleton and oaf, and Elisi's too horrid. And it's out of all proper grammar of fiction that her mother should have such a daughter."[3] The book found an interested reader, it may be added, in Froude, who said to Ruskin that, though it was "a story written with a purpose to exhibit a type of character, and therefore falls short of the purely dramatic," yet "of its kind it is the best that I ever read."

In the present edition, the chapters have been numbered consecutively throughout the book, for convenience of reference. Ruskin called the first four "Part I.," and the remainder "Part II.," though there seems no marked break in the story at the end of Chapter IV. The titles of the chapters are Gotthelf's throughout. Occasion has been taken of this re-issue of the book to correct some misprints, etc., and some alterations made by Ruskin (upon sheets in Mr. Wedderburn's possession) in his note on pp. 490–492 have been embodied. For particulars of these matters, see the Bibliographical Note (p. 342).

Ruskin sufficiently gives, in his Preface, such biographical facts as it is necessary to know with regard to the author of *Ulric*; and there and in the other places, already referred to, explains the qualities for which he commended the Swiss "Sir Walter."[4] Albert Bitzius was born at Morat in 1797, and died in 1854. He was educated at Berne and

[1] See below, p. 343 *n.*

[2] See Vol. XXVII. pp. 549 *seq.*, *nn.*

[3] Compare Ruskin's note to ch. xxiii. (p. 479).

[4] The stories of Scott and Gotthelf were examples of the "fair" Fiction by which he sought to correct the town-bred taste for the "foul": see Vol. XXXIV.

Göttingen, and entered the ministry. For five years (1824–1829) he was at Herzogenbuchsee; and then for eighteen months at Berne. In 1831 he became the pastor of Lutzelflüh, a village situated in the Emmenthal, canton Berne, between Burgdorf and Langnau, where he remained till his death. At the former place, a monument to him has recently been erected. Owing to a defect in his voice, he was a poor preacher, and he occupied himself with the material and moral welfare of his parishioners, giving particular attention to the schools. It was from close personal intimacy that he was able to give the accurate representation, which appears in his tales, of the thoughts, feelings, and habits of the peasantry among whom he lived. The pseudonym Gotthelf appeared on his first book, *The Mirror of Peasants*,[1] and was retained by Bitzius throughout. *Ulric*, it should be noted, appeared in two parts, forming a continuous whole—*Ulric the Farm Servant*, here alone translated, being the first (1841), and *Ulric the Tenant Farmer* the second (1849).[2] The translation of this second part, which Ruskin intended (p. 343) and which Mrs. Firth executed, has never yet been published; and this is somewhat unfortunate, as Ruskin's praise of Gotthelf and the character of Freneli, the heroine of the books, is much more justified by the second part of the story. Gotthelf, whom Ruskin introduced to English readers, is probably the most read and best known of Swiss authors; and his works have a distinctive place in the literature of modern Europe, for the novel of humble life, in which he led the way, was taken up in other lands, and he may thus be called the literary forerunner of Auerbach, Tourguenieff, and Tolstoy.

The *illustrations* in this volume have already been referred to. The *frontispiece* to *The Story of Ida* is printed from the steel-plate made for the original edition of that book. The *frontispiece* and nineteen other Plates appeared in Ruskin's edition of the *Roadside Songs*.

The *frontispiece* to *Christ's Folk* appeared in the revised edition of that book.

Five new Plates are added to the present volume,—"La Madonnina" (*frontispiece*), engraved from the original in the possession of Mr. M. H. Spielmann; three of the original leaves in Miss Alexander's *Tuscan Songs* (Plates III., V., and XVII.); and "Santa Rosa," reproduced from the *Magazine of Art* (XXVI.).

A few sheets of Ruskin's *manuscript* of *Roadside Songs* are at Brantwood, and one of these is here given in *facsimile* (p. 54).

E. T. C.

[1] *Der Bauerspiegel, oder Lebensgeschichte des Jeremias Gotthelf.*
[2] *Uli, der Knecht, and Uli, der Pächter.*

I

THE STORY OF IDA

(1883)

In the last ray of Sunset.

And the last day of the Year

1872.

THE STORY OF IDA:

EPITAPH ON AN ETRURIAN TOMB.

BY

FRANCESCA.

EDITED, WITH PREFACE, BY

JOHN RUSKIN, D.C.L.,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD; HONORARY FELLOW OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD; AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART, OXFORD.

GEORGE ALLEN,
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.
1883.

[*Bibliographical Note.*—Of *The Story of Ida* there have been numerous editions, but the text has remained unchanged throughout.

First Edition (1883).—The title-page was as shown here on the preceding leaf.

Crown 8vo, pp. vii.+94. Title-page (with imprint on the reverse—"Hazell, Watson, and Viney, Printers, London and Aylesbury"), pp. i.–ii.; Preface, pp. iii.–vii.; p. viii. blank. Text, pp. 1–94. Imprint repeated on a leaf facing p. 94. Frontispiece, "Ida in her last sleep."

Issued on May 18, 1883, in both brown and green cloth boards, lettered on the front and up the back: "The Story of Ida." 2000 copies. Price 3s.

There was also a large-paper edition, printed on Whatman's hand-made paper, and with the frontispiece pulled off on India paper. Issued in mottled-grey paper boards, lettered on the front, "The Story of Ida. | By Francesca," enclosed in a single ruled frame. 250 copies. Price 6s.

Second Edition (1883).—The title-page was slightly reset, but the particulars need not be given, as the words "Second Edition" were added.

Issued in November 1883, in the same style, and at the same price, as its predecessor. 3000 copies.

Third Edition (1885).—A reprint of the second, with the number of the edition and date upon the title-page. 3000 copies.

Fourth Edition (1890).—The title-page was reset, but there is "Fourth Edition" upon it. The collation followed that of preceding issues. 2000 copies.

This edition was in 1891 put up in "parchment" covers, lettered on the front, in red and black ink: "The Story of Ida. | By | Francesca Alexander. | With Preface by | John Ruskin. | George Allen, | Orpington and London," enclosed in a single ruled frame, with "Price One Shilling and Sixpence" below the rule; and "The Story of Ida" up the back. The price of copies in cloth was reduced in 1891 to 2s., and in January 1904 to 1s. 6d.

Fifth Edition (1892).—A reprint, with new title-page, of the preceding edition. 3000 copies.

Sixth Edition (July 1898).—As before, except that the imprint became "Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co. | At the Ballantyne Press." 1000 copies.

Re-issued in January 1901 (*Fifteenth Thousand*); and January 1904 (*Sixteenth Thousand*).

The Story of Ida was reprinted in America in various unauthorised editions.]

PREFACE

For now some ten or twelve years I have been asking every good writer whom I knew, to write some part of what was exactly true, in the greatest of the sciences, that of Humanity. It seemed to me time that the Poet and Romance-writer should become now the strict historian of days which, professing the openest proclamation of themselves, kept yet in secrecy all that was most beautiful, all that was most woful, in the multitude of their unshepherded souls. And, during these years of unanswered petitioning, I have become more and more convinced that the wholesomest antagonism to whatever is dangerous in the temper, or foolish in the extravagance, of modern Fiction, would be found in sometimes substituting, for the artfully-combined improbability, the careful record of providentially ordered Fact.

Providentially, I mean, not in the fitting together of evil so as to produce visible good,—but in the enforcement, though under shadows which mean but the difference between finite and infinite knowledge, of certain laws of moral retribution which enough indicate for our guidance, the Will, and for our comfort the Presence, of the Judge and Father of men.

It might be thought that the function of such domestic history was enough fulfilled by the frequency and full detail of modern biography. But lives in which the public are interested are scarcely ever worth writing. For the most part compulsorily artificial, often affectedly so,—on the whole, fortunate beyond ordinary rule,—and, so far as the men are really greater than others, unintelligible to the common reader,—the lives of statesmen, soldiers, authors,

artists, or any one habitually set in the sight of many, tell us at last little more than what sort of people they dealt with, and of pens they wrote with; the personal life is inscrutably broken up,—often contemptibly, and the external aspect of it merely a husk, at the best. The lives we need to have written for us are of the people whom the world has not thought of,—far less heard of,—who are yet doing the most of its work, and of whom we may learn how it can best be done.

The following story of a young Florentine girl's too short life is absolutely and simply true: it was written only for memorial of her among her friends, by the one of them that loved her best, and who knew her perfectly. That it was *not* written for publication will be felt after reading a few sentences; and I have had a certain feeling of desecrating its humility of affection, ever since I asked leave to publish it.

In the close of the first lecture given on my return to my duties in Oxford,[1] will be found all that I am minded at present to tell concerning the writer, and her friends among the Italian poor; and perhaps I, even thus, have told more than I ought, though not in the least enough to express my true regard and respect for her, or my admiration of her powers of rendering, with the severe industry of an engraver, the most pathetic instants of action and expression in the person she loves. Her drawing of Ida, as she lay asleep in the evening of the last day of the year 1872, has been very beautifully and attentively, yet not without necessary loss, reduced in the frontispiece, by Mr. W. Roffe, from its own size, three-quarters larger;—and thus, strangely, and again let me say, providentially, I can show, in the same book, examples of the purest truth, both in history, and picture. Of invented effects of light and shade on imaginary scenes, it seems to me we have

[1] [See *Art of England*, §§ 24–26 (Vol. XXXIII.).]

admired too many. Here is a real passage of human life, seen in the light that Heaven sent for it.

One earnest word only I have to add here, for the reader's sake,—let it be noted with thankful reverence that this is the story of a Catholic girl written by a Protestant one, yet the two of them so united in the Truth of the Christian Faith, and in the joy of its Love, that they are absolutely unconscious of any difference in the forms or letter of their religion.

J. Ruskin.

Brantwood, 14*th April*, 1883.

THE STORY OF IDA

PART I

A WEEK ago yesterday, I looked for the last time on her who has been, for so long, at once a care and a help to me.

I feel that her life has left a great peacefulness in mine, that will be a long time before it quite fades away, like the light which remains so long after sunset on a summer evening; and while I am yet, as it were, within her influence, I have wished to write down a little of what I remember of her, that so beautiful a life and death may not be quite forgotten.

It is now nearly four years ago, that a school-teacher, who had been long a friend of mine, came to ask that I would interest myself for one of her scholars, who was about to pass a difficult examination, that she might obtain a diploma of *Maestra Communale.* Giulia—that was the young girl's name—was a pleasant, fresh-looking girl, with honest, bright blue eyes, and dark hair that curled lightly about her forehead. Her voice and face interested me at once; and I soon found out that her history also was an interesting one. She was one of a family of fifteen children, then all dead but three; her father was advanced in life, her mother was an invalid, and they were all very poor. There was a sad story also in the family. One of Giulia's elder brothers had been married, and lived happily for some years with his wife. She died, leaving him with four little children; and such was the violence of his grief, that his mind gave way,—not all at once, but little by little. Gradually he began to neglect his work, his language and behaviour were agitated and unlike his usual self, he wandered much about without an object,—and one day the report of a pistol was heard in his room, and that was the last! The grandparents had taken home all the poor little orphans, and it was to assist in supporting them that Giulia wished to be a teacher.

She had been studying very hard—so hard that she had finished in six months the studies which should have occupied a year! She was an energetic little body, made bold by the necessities of the children; and she went about to the various offices, and had all the needful papers made out, and obtained introductions to all those persons whom she thought likely to help her in her object. Of course I was too happy to do what I could—very little as it happened—and Giulia's youth, and hopefulness, and bright spirit, were like sunshine in my room. She was much there in those days, talking over her prospects, and what was to be done. One day she came with a very beautiful companion, a little girl of sixteen: "I

have brought my sister; she wanted to see you," she said, by way of apology; and that was how I came to know Ida.

She was very lovely then; I do not think that any of the pictures which I afterwards took of her, were quite so pretty as she was. Let me see if I can describe her. She was a little taller than Giulia, and perhaps rather too slight for perfect beauty, but singularly graceful both in form and movement. Such a shape as the early painters used to imagine for their young saints, with more spirit than substance about it; her hair was dark, almost black, quite straight, as fine as silk, soft, heavy, and abundant; and she wore it turned back from her face, as was the fashion just then, displaying to the best advantage a clear, broad, intellectual forehead. She had a regular oval face, rather small than large; with soft black eyes of wonderful beauty and gentleness, shaded by perhaps the longest lashes which I ever saw—with a pretty little straight nose (which gave a peculiar prettiness to her profile), and a mouth not very small, but beautiful in form and most delicate in expression. Her teeth were very white, brilliant, and regular; her complexion was dark, without much colour, except in her lips, which were of a deep red. When she was a little out of breath, however, or when she was animated in talking, a bright glow used to come up in her cheeks, always disappearing almost before one knew that it was there. She and I made great friends during that first visit: she liked me, as a matter of course, because Giulia liked me; and on my part, it would have been impossible that I should not love anything so beautiful and innocent and affectionate. I did not let her go until we had arranged that I should take her likeness; and from that time forward, as long as Ida lived, I was almost half the time employed either in drawing or painting her. It was seldom that I could keep any picture of her for more than a little while: every one used to ask me where I had found such a beautiful face.

It is pleasant to me now to look back at those days, before any shadow came over that peaceful and most innocent life. Those long happy mornings in my painting room, when she used to become so excited over my fairy stories and ballads, and tried to learn them all by heart to tell to Giulia; and when she, in turn, confided to me all the events and interests of her short life. One thing I soon discovered,—that she was quite as beautiful in mind as in person. If I tell all the truth of what Ida was, I am sure that it will seem to any one who did not know her as if I were inventing. She seemed, even in those early days, like one who lived nearer heaven than other people.

I have never quite understood it myself; she had been brought up more in the world than is usual with Italian girls, for (as I have said) her parents were poor, and her mother sickly, and she had been obliged, even from early childhood, to work hard for her daily bread. It seems almost impossible that no bad influence should ever have come near her; but if it ever did, it passed by without harming her, for there was nothing in her on which it could take hold. Her mind seemed to turn naturally to everything that was good and beautiful, while what was evil made no impression on her, but passed by her as if it had not been.

She lived in a dismal old house, up a great many stairs, in one of the poorest streets of the city. All this does not sound very pleasant: but

what did Ida see there? Any one else would have seen, looking from the windows there, dirty old houses out of repair, crammed full of poverty, broken windows, leaky roofs, rickety stairs, rags hung out to dry from garret windows, pale, untidy, discouraged women, neglected children. Ida saw the bright sky, and the swallows that built under the eaves, and the moss and flowers that grew between the tiles on the old roofs. And from one window she could see a little far-away glimpse of the country, and from another she could look down into a garden. She saw the poor neighbours besides, but to her they were all people to be loved, and pitied, and sympathised with. Whatever there was, good, in any of them, she found it out, and ignored everything else. It was a peculiarity of my Ida, that all the people with whom she was intimately acquainted were, in some way or other, "very remarkable." She never admitted that they had any faults. One old woman whose temper was so fearful that nobody could live with her, was "a good old woman, but a little nervous. She had been an invalid for many years, and was a great sufferer, and naturally she had her days when things worried her." An idle, dirty old fellow, who lodged in the same house,—who lived principally by getting into debt at one eating-house until the owner would trust him no longer, and then going to another,—she described as "an unfortunate gentleman in reduced circumstances, who had been educated in high life, and consequently had never learnt to do anything. Besides, he was a poet, and poets are always peculiar." A profane man, who talked atheism, she charitably said was probably insane. Poor little Ida! The time came when her eyes were opened by force; when she saw sin in its ugliness in the person of one who was very dear to her,—and then she died.

But that was some time afterwards. I am writing now of that first happy winter, when I was coming, little by little, to know what my companion was. *All* that she was, I never knew till after she was gone. Ida was a little seamstress, and she was then only beginning to earn money. Thirty centimes a day* was what she gained when she worked for a shop, and for this she used to sit at the sewing machine until past midnight. Sometimes she used to sew for ladies at their houses, and then she earned a franc a day or more.

Her parents allowed her to keep all her own earnings, that she might clothe herself; but there was always something that she wanted for father, or mother, or Giulia, or the little orphans, more than anything that she wanted for herself; so that her own dress was always kept down to objects of the strictest necessity. I am sure it was not that she did not care for pretty things as much as any other girl: if any of the ladies where she worked gave her a piece of ribbon, or a scrap of coloured silk, or anything else that was bright and pretty, it was an unending amusement to make it up in some fanciful and becoming style, whether for Giulia or herself, though she always enjoyed the most working for Giulia. But generally she was engaged in saving money, a few centimes at a time, to buy a present for somebody, which was a great secret, confided to me under promise of silence. *One centime a day* she always laid by for "the

* Three English pence. The larger payment at private houses, a franc, is one hundred centimes, or tenpence.

poor." "It is very little," she said, "but I save it up until Sunday, and it is enough to buy a piece of bread for an old blind man, who always comes to us for his breakfast on Sunday morning."

When the time came for Giulia to pass her examination, Ida came to my room every day, and sometimes twice a day, to tell me what progress she was making. Often she came when I was not at home, and then she would write a note with my pencil on a scrap of paper, and pin it up to the window-frame, where I should be sure to see it. I have kept some of these little notes up to this time, written in a childish round hand, telling how many "marks" Giulia had received for geography, and how many for grammar, all signed in the same way—"*La sua Ida che li vuol tanto bene!*" As long as she lived, her letters were always signed in the same way. Often I would find two or three flowers, carefully arranged by her hand, in a glass of water on my table; or, if I had left my door locked, they would be made into a fanciful bunch, and tied with a bit of blue ribbon on the door-handle. Giulia passed her examination triumphantly, as she deserved to do; and soon after obtained a place as teacher in one of the free schools. I remember that there was a great excitement at that time with regard to a new dress, which Giulia was to wear when she took charge of her class. Ida had been saving money for a great while to buy that dress—it was a grey alpaca—and it was all made, and trimmed, and ready to put on, before Giulia knew anything about it. First I saw the dress unmade, and then made; and then Giulia hurried over to show it to me, supposing that I should be as much surprised as she was.

Meanwhile the winter had passed into spring, and spring was wearing fast into summer, and my pretty Ida was beginning to look rather poorly. She grew very thin, and had but little appetite; I thought also that she looked rather sad—but if I asked her what was the matter, she always said that she was tired, and felt the warm weather. I forgot to say that her mother let rooms to lodgers; by the way, the vagabond poet of whom I have spoken was a lodger of hers. A man who had lodged with them for some time had just then left them; and a military officer had taken his room. I remember still the day when Ida first spoke to me of this man, and seemed pleased that her mother had found a new lodger instead of the old one. Oh, if I could only have warned her against him then!

But, as I have said, Ida seemed to be fading, and I felt pretty anxious about her. We were going up to the mountains about that time, and when we parted she said, "Perhaps you will not find me when you come back; I feel as if I should not live very long." But she could give me no reason for this presentiment, and I attached no great importance to it, thinking only that she was weak and nervous. After we had been for a few weeks at S. Marcello, I received a letter from her, almost unintelligible, written evidently in great distress of mind, in which she entreated me, if possible, to come to Florence that she might speak to me, as she was in much trouble. She added that she wished she had confided in me sooner; and begged me in no case to let any one know that I had received a letter from her, but to direct my answer to the post-office, and not to the house. I was greatly alarmed, and wrote to her without losing a minute, telling her that it was impossible that I could go to Florence

(as the journey was much longer than I had supposed), and begging her to write again immediately, and tell me what was really the matter. After two or three days of almost unbearable suspense, her answer came,—long enough, and plain enough, this time. I wish now that I had kept her letter, that I might tell this part of her sad story in her own words. In my own, it is hard for me to tell it without speaking more harshly than I would, of one who has at least this claim on my forbearance—that Ida loved him!

The military officer of whom I have spoken, who had then been for three or four months in the house, had fallen in love with Ida, in his fashion: that is, she was not his first love, probably not his last, but she pleased him. He was a man of not far from forty years old, good-looking in a certain way, broad-shouldered, tall, fresh-coloured; and very much of a gentleman in his manners. He was a man of talent besides, and he had travelled much in his military life, and could tell interesting stories of strange places and people. He had also read a great deal, and could talk of various authors, and quote poetry on all occasions. As a soldier and an Italian, he had, I believe, done himself honour.

I wish I could think that there was some foundation of truth in the passionate attachment which he professed for Ida. I suppose he was fond of her, somewhat, for I do not see what reason he could have had for pretending it. He said himself, afterwards, by way of excuse, that he was "blinded by passion": so let it be. Ida was then just seventeen, growing prettier every day, a delicate, spiritual little creature, looking as if the wind might blow her away; and this military hero, with the broad shoulders and the fair hair, threw himself at her feet, so to say; courted her passionately, desperately; and Ida gave him her heart unreservedly, and trusted him as she trusted her father and mother. I sometimes fancy that this man made love to Ida at first partly to amuse himself, to see if he could not put something of this world into the heart of this gentle little saint, who lived always, as it were, half in heaven. But if so, he was disappointed. This love once admitted into her heart became, like all her other feelings, something sacred and noble; so that, even at this day, it seems to me in a certain way to ennoble the object of it, unworthy as he was; and I cannot say a word that might bring discredit on his name.

He wished to marry her immediately; and her father and mother, simple, pious, kind-hearted people, who would have given their lives for the happiness of their children, consented willingly. They knew that he was poor and an orphan, but they were not ambitious for their pretty daughter; and they promised to take him home, and keep him as a son of their own. But now came the difficulty. L——* was an officer in the army, and by the present law in Italy an officer, until he reaches some particular rank—I think that of colonel,—is not permitted to marry, unless the woman of his choice has a certain amount of dowry. L—— had about two years and a half left to serve in the army, before he would be entitled to a pension. Now, Ida was so very young that there seemed nothing very dreadful in the idea of waiting, but her lover was a great

* L is not the initial of the lover's real name, nor of that by which Ida called him, which is used by Francesca in her manuscript. [J. R.]

deal too ardent for that. His proposal was—and he would hear of nothing else—that they should be married immediately by a *religious marriage*, leaving the *civil marriage*—the only one now legal—until another time, when his career in the army should be finished. The poor child knew nothing of civil and religious marriages, but she was a little frightened at the idea that her marriage would be a secret from the whole world; and altogether she was far from happy,—he told her so many things that she was never to tell any one, and such fearful ruin was to overtake them both if ever their union was discovered. Meanwhile he was very tender and grateful and reverential, not only to her but to all the family. Now at last—so he used to say—"he knew what it was to have a home and a mother! What a mercy that he, who had suffered so much in his wandering life, who had been so lonely and friendless, should have anchored at last in that peaceful Christian home!" That was the way he used to talk.

Meanwhile Giulia, the sensible, clear-sighted Giulia, whose heart was all bound up in her little sister, felt an unspeakable antipathy to L——. On the same day when Ida's second letter arrived at S. Marcello, explaining to me her circumstances, one came also from Giulia, giving *her* version of the story, no way differing from Ida's in the facts, but even more sad and frightened. "I cannot tell you, dear Signora Francesca," she wrote, "in what a state of continual agitation I pass my time at present, and how unhappy I am about our Ida. God grant that all may go well! Mother has gone to the priest to-day to see what they can do." I knew afterwards that Giulia, finding all persuasions fail with her sister (and indeed she had nothing then to bring up against L——, except her instinctive dread and dislike of him), entreated her mother, even with tears, to prevent the marriage by any means whatever. But the good Signora Martina (who was just as pretty, and gentle, and soft-hearted as Ida herself) could not bear the pale, wasting face of her younger daughter, and her little hands that were growing so thin, and her sad voice; and she thought that it all came of her love for the captain, and that, if she consented to the secret marriage, Ida would grow bright and happy again.

I, at that time, knew almost nothing about such things, and could not therefore advise very strongly on one side or the other. But it pleased the Lord that the worst should not happen to our Ida. L—— was called away from Florence at a few hours' notice, to join his regiment, on *the very day before the one fixed for the marriage.* The government was just then making its preparations for the taking of Rome. What she suffered from this separation is not to be told, yet I feel that it was a providence to save her from far greater evil. When we came back to Florence in September I found Ida quite changed in appearance, but patient and resigned as she always was—willing, as she said, to leave all in the Lord's hand. "Her L—— was so good!" she used to tell me: "he had been so kind to his own family!" in particular to his brother's widow, who had been left in destitution with two little children, and to whom he was continually sending money, though he had so little to send. He did not, however, wish to have anything said about this woman, as he feared that Ida's parents might not so willingly consent to the marriage, if they knew that he was so burdened. L—— always had a great many things

that he did not wish anything said about. Giulia, however, had her suspicions, and I had mine, about this brother's widow. We both spoke about them—Giulia, I rather think, pretty freely—to Ida. She had resolution enough, when right and wrong were concerned; and without saying anything to Giulia she went to the post-office, and inquired of the people employed there, if her lover were really in the habit of sending money to Naples, where his sister-in-law lived, and to whom. A record is always kept at the post-office of all the money that comes and goes, so that it was easy to ascertain the truth. And she found that he frequently sent money to a woman in Naples, bearing the same family name as himself. So she and I and Giulia were all quite satisfied. There was a depth of wickedness that we could not imagine, and that even now I find it hard fully to believe, with all the proofs before me!

And now the Italian troops were preparing to march upon Rome, and we were all fearing a great battle; which really never came. We were all preparing lint and bandages, thinking that they might be wanted, as on former occasions; and my mother gave out work of this sort to all whom she could find to do it. Ida, I remember, refused to be paid for any work of this sort which she did for the army, saying, "Perhaps it may go for L——,"—and while she sat, very pale and quiet, over her lint-making in my room, I drew that picture of her which I called "La Fidanzata del Capitano," which I think more like her than any of my other pictures, though not half so pretty as she was, for all that.

And now I am coming to the darkest part of my Ida's history—a time when she suffered much, and which I do not like very well to think about. I said before that I did not know much then about civil marriage. The law had not been in operation more than a little while. But at the same time, I did not feel quite easy about this marriage which was to be kept a secret. It seemed to me that my poor Ida was passing into a perfect network of secrets and mystery. I knew that the captain intended to marry her when he should come back from Rome—and that would probably be very soon. So I consulted a friend, who knew more about such things than I did, and she told me just what this religious marriage was—that is, as far as its consequences for this world were concerned, no marriage at all. Then I thought that I ought to tell Ida what she was doing,—which was not very easy, for I knew how her heart was bound up in L——.

One day, up there in my room, we talked it all over, and I told her, as gently as I could, all that had been told to me. She was much shocked and distressed, and shed a great many tears, but quietly. What affected her most was the idea that such a marriage might bring misery on her children, if she should ever have any. "It must be fearful," she said, "for a woman to feel remorse in the presence of her children,—to see them in misery and to think '*I brought this trouble upon them!*'" Then she added, "People have all been very cruel not to have told me these things before! I knew that I could not have borne such a life." Still, she was not willing at that time to make me a definite promise that she would not do it. I was anxious that she should do so, as we were about going away for a month's visit to Padova and Bassano. During that month I knew that L—— was expected in Florence, and I feared his influence

upon her. Ida was so very gentle, and usually so submissive to those about her, that I did not then comprehend the true strength and determination of her character.

A day or two afterwards she came to say goodbye before I went. "I had a sad night," she said, "after our talk the other day; I could not sleep for thinking of L——. But you must not think hardly of him: he has always meant well, but he is a passionate, impulsive man, and does not know always how to stop and think of the consequences. You must not be anxious about me while you are away. I cannot make you any promise just now, but I have quite resolved never to marry until we can be married legally, and I hope that I can promise you this when you come back." During the month that we were away I heard no more of Ida, and those to whom I told her story shook their heads, and prophesied that the captain would have it all his own way when he should come to Florence. I did not think so, but I kept silence, for I had no reason for my faith, excepting a certain look in Ida's beautiful eyes when she said those words to me,—a look humble and yet steadfast, as of one strong in another's strength,—a look that I would give a good deal if I could put in some of my pictures of saints.

When at last I did come back, Ida came to my room as soon as she heard that I was there. She looked pale and frightened and ill, and began to talk almost before she was in the room, as if she had something that she was in a great hurry to say. "I have come to make you that promise, Signora Francesca, which I could not make you before you went away. I promise you that I will never marry L——, nor any one else, excepting by a lawful marriage." "I thought," I said, "that you had come to tell me this, and I am very thankful to hear it." "And I have been in such a hurry," she said, "for you to come home, that I might say this to you. I have been afraid always that my courage would not hold out." I then asked her to tell me exactly how it had all gone. She said that L—— had come back from Rome about a week before, fully prepared for the marriage. She had not told him of her change of resolution before his return—she could not make up her mind to write it to him: but as soon as he came, and she had a chance to speak to him alone, she told him all that I had told her, saying that she had consented at first to the religious marriage in ignorance, but that she was now convinced that it would be wrong. At first he seems to have thought, as every one else thought, that he could make Ida do what he pleased; then, when he found that she stood firm against all his persuasions, he went into a passion, and terrified the poor girl beyond measure with his violence, still without shaking her resolution. And then he left her in anger, and went away from Florence without seeing her again, and she had not heard from him since. She had been ill—had been three days confined to her bed—and she looked half dead; and I noticed then, for the first time, that peculiar tone in her voice which it never afterwards lost.

Still, she said that she was not sorry for what she had done, let it end as it might. It was all in God's hands now, and as He had ordered it, so it would be. She had been very unhappy, but she felt less so now that I had come; and it would certainly have been a great deal worse if she had married L—— first, and found out all these things afterwards. I

tried to comfort her, though I myself felt a good deal shocked and surprised at the turn which things had taken. I told her that if L—— really cared for her he would write to her again, and would be willing to wait for the two years and a half. "I cannot feel," she said, "as if it could ever come right now, but we shall see."

Two days afterwards she really did receive a very penitent and affectionate letter from L——, which she brought to me; but she was not very much cheered by it. She still loved L——, but she no longer trusted him, though she always tried to excuse his conduct in speaking of him; but I do not know if there be anything in the world more unhappy than love without trust. He had been ordered to Sicily, to fight the brigands, and they were not likely to meet again for many months. I did not quite know what to make of this letter; it was very fervent in its expressions of affection, full of desperate sorrow for the long and inevitable separation. But there was not a word in it about marriage. I noticed the same thing in his succeeding letters, which for a long time she always brought for me to read. Some of them were very beautiful letters, full of interesting descriptions, and of much tender and lofty sentiment. He would speak of her as "the lamp that gave light to his life"; he sent many affectionate and reverential messages to "the dear mother whom he loved as his own" (and only to think of the trouble that he brought on this *dear mother!*), but he never spoke of their marriage, or of their future home. Besides, his letters were, to my mind, just a little too virtuous, too full of sensitive shrinking from other people's sins, pathetic lamentations about the wickedness of the Sicilians, and paternal advice to Ida, who was so much better than he was! That style may do very well for a clergyman, but I rather distrust it in a military man. However, I supposed that all would end well, and that there was probably some reason, more than I knew, for whatever seemed strange in L——'s conduct. I tried to keep up Ida's courage—more, I think now, than I should have done—but she was gradually coming to talk less about L——; less, indeed, about anything. She liked better than anything else to sit and read when she came to my room. She took her choice always of my books, generally choosing poetry —religious poetry rather than anything else; and she used to read aloud to me with great simplicity of manner (for she had never been taught declamation), but with a certain tone in her voice which invariably put me into tears, so that I sometimes had to stop her reading, as it made me unable to go on with my work. The room which had been occupied by L—— when he lived in Florence had now been taken by a married couple; the husband was an officer, and his wife married to him only by a religious marriage. This poor woman was very unhappy, and she confided her troubles to Ida, who often spoke to me about her. Once she said to me that I had done a great deal for her in many ways (this was only a fancy of hers, arising out of her strong affection for me), but never so much as when I had prevented the religious marriage; that she should have died if she had found herself in the condition of her poor neighbour. It was a comfort to me that she said so, as I had begun to feel almost sorry for the part which I had taken, seeing how she was pining, and to wish that I had not interfered about this marriage, which, after all, however dangerous, would not have been regarded by the Church as sinful.

But I *knew* now that I did right in that matter. She gradually stopped bringing L——'s letters for me to read; and when I spoke of him, she used to tell me that the feeling was strong in her mind that she should never be L——'s wife, and that she tried not to think too much about it, nor to set her heart upon it, but to keep herself "ready for the Lord's will, whatever it might be."

*One day she found a New Testament in my room,** the first which she had ever seen; and after that she never cared so much for any other book, but would sit and read chapter after chapter with never-failing delight, only interrupting herself now and then to say, "How beautiful!" When Giulia had a holiday she used to come also, and she was as much pleased with the Testament as her sister. The two girls would sit by me while I painted, by the hour together, and one would read till her voice was tired, and then hand the book to her sister; and so they would go on taking turns until they would read often more than twenty chapters at once. When I found they did not grow tired of it, I gave them a Testament to keep for themselves, and such was their excitement that they sat up reading it nearly all the first night after they had it.

Meanwhile, poor Ida had continued to grow thin and pale, and did not eat enough for a sparrow. We took her to our good English doctor, but he was not able to do much for her, and indeed could not tell what was the matter with her. He thought that the room where she slept was unhealthy, as there was no window in it. The family, being poor, were obliged to let all their good rooms, and to occupy all the dark and inconvenient ones themselves; so that Ida and Giulia and their little niece Luisa slept all together in what was really nothing more than a dark closet. He thought also that she had injured herself by drawing water for her mother, who took in washing. So Giulia, out of her small earnings, hired a woman to come every day and draw the water, and the poet received notice to leave his room at the beginning of the next month. This was the less loss, as he had not paid his rent for some time, and the family were also frequently obliged to give him his dinner, because, as Ida told me, "they could not eat their own meal in comfort while there was a man in the house with nothing to eat." He said, when told that he must leave, as Ida was ill and needed the room, that, *being for that reason,* he could not refuse; and when the time came he walked away majestically, with a bundle of manuscript and a pair of old shoes, which appeared to constitute his whole property. And now, as I shall never say anything more about the poet, I will add to his credit, that he afterwards came back, to everybody's astonishment, and paid up all his debts, having obtained employment, I believe, to write for a republican newspaper.

So that year finished and another came; and Ida had a little cough, but no one thought much of it. We went away again into the country for two months, and during that time the sisters wrote to me twice, and Ida's letters were happy and affectionate, and she seemed to enjoy her new room (which was the very one that looked away into the country), and she spoke again of L——, as I thought, more hopefully.

* Italics mine. [J. R.]

We went back to Florence about the first of September, and I found Ida still ailing, but with nothing particular the matter with her. She was studying for an examination so that she might also be a teacher, and she said that L—— wished it. He had now (I believe) only a year and a little more left to serve in the army, and during that time he expected to come to Florence for a visit. I told her that the time would pass soon, and that the long waiting was nearly over, and she and L—— would be happy now before very long. To this she only answered—"*As God has destined it, so will it be.*" I thought sometimes that she had become indifferent to her lover, or else that she was frightened about her own health, and did not expect to recover. I did not like to have her study so much, as I was sure it hurt her; but about that it was of no use for me to talk. L——'s will was law to her, if only it did not interfere with her own conscience.

Her cough had increased, and she could not read to me very often. Then one night she was taken ill with insupportable pains in her shoulders, which lasted for several hours, and then left her as weak as a baby. That was the beginning of the end.

Poor Giulia suffered more, I think, than her sister. She was now herself engaged to be married, and should naturally have been saving a little money for her wedding outfit. But of this she thought nothing; there was no room in her heart now for anything but Ida. All that she could save she spent daily in an attempt, nearly vain, to buy something that her sister could eat, and then she would come to my room, crying bitterly, to tell me of her failures and of Ida's constantly progressing illness. But Ida continued to come to my room all that winter and spring, and the change in her for the worse was so *very* gradual that I was not much frightened about her. She seemed cheerful and interested in everything about her, as indeed she always had been. She was more beautiful than ever, and might have turned the heads of half the men in Florence if she had been so disposed, for as a general rule all those who saw her fell more or less in love with her. But Ida, kind and friendly in her manners with all those who treated her respectfully and kept their distance, would shrink into herself, and become quite unapproachable at the least shadow of a compliment; so that I do not think, after all, that any of her numerous admirers ever went so far as to make themselves very unhappy about her, seeing from the first that she was out of their reach.

All the poor people used to call her "Signora," [1] *now that she was grown up, though her condition was no higher than their own. I am sure that it was not that she was better dressed than themselves (excepting in the one matter of neatness)*, still less that she gave herself any airs of superiority, for she was humble almost to a fault, *willing to act as servant to the lowest amongst them if she could be of any use,** ready on all occasions to take the lowest place. But there was a certain peculiar refinement and unconscious loftiness about her which we all felt, and which raised her above other people.

* Italics all mine. [J. R.]

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[1] [Ruskin refers to this passage in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 93 (Vol. XXIX. p. 473).]

And the summer came again, and this time we had to go away earlier than in other years because we had a friend very ill in Venice, who wished us to come to him. Ida came to take leave of me as I was preparing to leave my painting room, and she seemed more sorry to have me go than she had ever been before. She loved dearly that room where we had first met, and where we had spent so many hours together, some sad and some happy: it had always been one of her principal cares to put it in order when she came to me, and to bring flowers for it, and to make it look as pleasant and pretty as she could. And on that day she walked around it slowly, stopping often that she might look long on each one of the objects grown, in the course of time, to be like familiar friends. And then she came up to me and kissed me, and I saw that her eyes were overflowing with tears. I wonder if the thought was in her mind that she should never see the place again.

PART II*

WHAT I am going to write now was not known to me until very lately—at least, the greater part of it was not. Before I left Florence, however, I had begun to feel pretty sure that Ida's mysterious illness came of her grief for L——. One day I said to her, "Ida, tell me if I have guessed rightly: you have suffered more about L—— than you have been willing to tell." And she answered, "If I have, I have never troubled any one else about it."

A few days after I left her, L—— made his long promised visit to Florence. He seemed troubled at the change in Ida, and met her at first very kindly. He saw her, however, only once, and then left her, saying that he would come again the next day. The next day, however, instead of L—— himself, came a letter from him saying that he had been obliged to leave Florence in haste, and that he had not felt able to support the sorrow of taking leave of Ida. They never met again.

Ida was much grieved at his leaving her so abruptly. Giulia was more than grieved,—she was suspicious of something worse than appeared. Now, there lived in Florence a cousin of L——'s, a married lady, with whom the two girls were hardly acquainted. To her Giulia went in her trouble, and told her all about Ida, and how strangely L—— had behaved towards her; and she asked her to tell her the truth, if she knew it, whether he really intended to marry her when he should leave the army. The lady appeared troubled, and answered her very sadly, "You must know that L—— is in a very difficult position; he has grave duties to perform." "What duties?" asked Giulia, who could not imagine that any duty could be greater than his duty to her sister. And the lady answered, yet more sadly than before, that he was the father of two children. The horror of the innocent open-hearted Giulia is more easily imagined than described. Trembling, she asked of the children's mother, and learned that she was another victim, even more unfortunate than Ida. L—— had married her by a *religious* marriage,† promising to marry her legally when he should leave the army. She was a Neapolitan, the very same widowed sister-in-law to whom he had been in the habit of sending money. So all was explained.

Her first impulse was to tell everything to her sister; but Ida was very weak just then, and she almost feared that such a shock would be fatal to her. The same consideration prevented her telling either of her parents, as she feared that they would be unable to contain their indignation. Then she thought that perhaps Ida was going to die, and in that case perhaps it would be better that she should never know on what a worthless object

* Thus divided by the writer—the evening from the morning. They are but one day. [J. R.]

† I do not understand how the Catholic priesthood permits itself to be made an instrument of this wickedness. [J. R.]

she had set her heart. But she did what was most natural to such an open, straightforward girl as Giulia. She wrote to L—— himself, and let him know that she had discovered all. She also told him that Ida was growing always worse, and that she should not tell her anything about it while she was so ill; and she entreated him not to let her suspect anything until she should have recovered.

Now, I cannot imagine what was the captain's motive for what he did —whether he did not believe Giulia's promise of silence, or whether he was tired of Ida and wished to rid himself of her. However it may have been, he did what was sufficiently cruel: he wrote Ida a letter, and told her the whole. Ida never showed that letter to any one, so I only know what she told Giulia, who told me. He told her that he was not legally bound to his Neapolitan wife, and that he meant to separate from her and to marry Ida, but that it might be some little time before he could complete the necessary arrangements.

From the day that this letter arrived all hope was over for Ida, so far as this world was concerned. She broke a blood-vessel the same day, and was never the same again. She wrote immediately to L——, without reproach or resentment, and told him that there was only one thing for him to do: to marry the poor woman whom he had deceived, and to give a name to his children.

Meanwhile she told no one, not even her sister. *In the utter unselfishness of her affection for L——, she seems almost to have forgotten her own trouble, and to have thought only of saving him from all appearance of blame.** And so, for a long time, those two young girls lived on together, each one bearing her own burden in silence. Ida's hold on this world had never been very strong, and it had quite given way now. Her life was going fast away from her.

Meanwhile, L—— seems to have felt his old affection for her, such as it was, revive, at the idea of losing her altogether; and he continued to write her passionate and imploring letters. Her answers were very gentle and patient, written so as to spare his feelings as much as possible, but they were very decided. She could never belong to him now—he must not think of that any more—but she entreated him to make what reparation he could to the poor Neapolitan, and to give *her* the happiness, before they parted, of knowing that he had done right.

And poor Giulia was at her wits' end, seeing her sister grow so rapidly worse, and not knowing the reason. She wrote to me at Venice, begging that I would use my influence to have her sister admitted to the Marine Hospital at Viareggio, that she might have a month's sea bathing, which some thought would be good for her. As soon as Ida heard that I was interesting myself about this, she also wrote me a few lines—the last which I ever received from her. She thanked me most affectionately, but did not wish me to do anything more about it, or to spend any money: if it was the Lord's will that she should recover, then she *should* recover. And then, for the last time, came the old signature, in a very tremulous hand now—"La sua Ida, che li vuol tanto bene."

However, I still worked to have her admitted, and she *was* admitted.

* Italics mine. [J. R.]

Poor girl! I did not understand then, as I do now, the meaning of her letter. I thought that she wished only to save me trouble; but I know now that she wrote me because she felt that her malady was such a one as no doctors can cure. It was about that time that Giulia discovered, by some means, that her sister knew the secret which she had been keeping from her so carefully. I think they were both a little happier, or at least a little less miserable, when they were able to speak freely to each other of what was weighing so heavily on both their minds. About that time also L—— left the army, having obtained his dismission a little sooner than was expected. So Ida went to the Marine Hospital for a month, and won the hearts of the sisters of charity by her beauty, her patience, and her self-forgetfulness. She always waited on herself, being careful to give no one trouble; and when the doctor ordered her to use some particular herb which grew wild at Viareggio, *she went out every morning to search for it, gathered, and prepared it herself.* She was very kind and attentive also to the poor sick children, who, as usual, made up nearly all the inmates of the hospital.

I am afraid that the letters which I wrote her at this time must have given her much pain; for I thought that she would recover, and marry L——, who was now, as I supposed, free; and I used to write to her about it, meaning to encourage her. She never answered my letters, but she sent one of them to Giulia, and wrote to her—"The Signora Francesca deceives herself always; it is better so."

L——, finding that his professions of love would not soften Ida, next tried to work on her compassion. He wrote to her that there was great delay about paying his pension, and that his children were starving!

She sent him twenty francs for his children in a letter: she did not have the money with her, and she was obliged to write to her sister Giulia to lend it to her, saying that she could not bear the thought that L——'s children should suffer. After she went back to Florence she wished to pay this money, but Giulia would never take it from her; which I suppose was one reason why she left Giulia what she did at the time of her death, rather more than four months afterwards.

Having gone back to Florence much worse than she had left it, she finally obtained the much-wished-for promise from L——, who agreed to marry his wife legally, and to make what reparation he could to his unfortunate children. Up to this time Ida had not been willing to follow the urgent advice of Giulia, and break off all communication with L——. As I did not know these facts until after her death, of course it is not possible for me to say what her reasons were; but I imagine, from what I know of Ida's character and of all her conduct in this matter, that it was her wish that this love which had cost her her life should not be altogether wasted, and that it was a comfort to her, in resigning all her own hopes of happiness, to think that she might save L—— from sin, and his family from misery.

Giulia had wished her to let me know all these particulars, saying, "The Signora Francesca would tell us what we ought to do." To which Ida replied, "*I know what I ought to do, and I will do it;** the Signora

* Italics Francesca's, and mine also. [J. R.]

loves me, and would be unhappy if she knew of my troubles." But now she agreed to her sister's wish, and wrote a kind letter taking leave of L——, and asking him not to answer it, nor to write to her again. She told him, that he must not think that she had any hard feeling against him because she made this request, but she thought that it would be more for the happiness of both of them, that they should cease all communication with each other.

The effort of writing this letter was so great, that at first it nearly killed her, and she became suddenly so much worse, that Giulia wished it had never been written. However, after a few days, that singular peacefulness began to come over her, which afterwards remained until she died; and she told Giulia that she felt more tranquil than for a great while before, and that if L—— should write her another letter she would not even look at it, but would give it to her sister to read and answer, that she might keep all these past troubles out of her mind.

I have done now with all the worldly part of my Ida's story: what remains will be only the account of her most wonderful and glorious passage into the other world, and of the singular and almost visible help which it pleased the Lord to give her in her long illness. So, before going any farther, I will just tell what little more I know about L——. He never wrote to her again, but he continued to send occasionally to the house for news of her, almost until the time of her death. I have never been able to discover whether he ever kept his promise and married his wife legally, but I hope that he did so.* She appears from what I have heard of her, to have been by no means a very amiable character; but then there are few tempers so sweet as not to be soured by such trouble as hers.

So October came, and once again I found myself in Florence; where almost my first visit was to Ida's room. My first thought on seeing her was that she looked better than when I had left her. She sat in an easy chair by the open window,—that window that looked away over the roofs into the open country; and she had her sewing as usual, for she always worked until she became so feeble as to make it actually impossible. I remember her, and everything about her, as if the scene were still before me. She was dressed in a sort of grey loose gown put on over her white night-dress, which gave her something of a monastic look, and her chair was covered with a chintz of a flowered pattern; her work-basket stood in a chair at her knee, and by her side was a little old table, with a few books on it, much worn. She was very white certainly, but it was a clear luminous white that was extremely beautiful, and her lips still retained their bloom, which indeed they never lost. Her soft hair was partly dishevelled, for she had just been lying down; but it was such hair as never could look rough, and as it fell loosely about her face and neck, it so concealed their wasting that she appeared almost like one in health. Her eyes were larger and brighter than ever—all full of light, it seemed to me—and her face had lost that worn, patient look, which it had borne so long, and appeared all illuminated with happiness.

But if the first sight of her gave me hope, as soon as she began to speak the hope was gone. Her voice had grown very feeble, and nearly

* He did. [J. R.]

every sentence ended in a cough, so violent that it seemed as if it would carry her away in a minute. She was quite overcome with joy and thankfulness at seeing me again, and it was difficult to keep her from talking more than was prudent. "Oh, Signora Francesca, how I have wanted you to come!" she kept saying, and her little feverish half-transparent hands closed very tightly about mine, and her beautiful eyes looked into my face as if they could never see enough of me. Meanwhile Giulia sat watching us with a flushed, anxious face, and blue eyes that kept filling with tears. No doubt about which of the sisters suffered the most, *now!*

As for me, I tried not to look troubled, and to remember all that I could about Venice, and what I had seen on my journey, to tell Ida; and I sang her some of the old tunes that she had been so fond of, and read her a little in the Testament, and she was very happy, and we made it as much like old times as we could. After that I always went to Ida, at first two or three times a week, and afterwards every day, as long as she lived. She could not talk to me a great deal, but the few words that she said were full of comfort.

Every day I used to read the Bible to her. She asked me to read always that, and no other book, and sing her some little hymn. *I never knew any other person so perfectly peaceful and happy as she was then, and for the remaining time, nearly four months,* that I had the privilege of being near her. She seemed to me almost in heaven already, living in the sensible presence of our Lord, and in the enjoyment of heavenly things, as I have never known any one else do, *for so long a time.** The almost supernatural happiness which she enjoyed—(indeed, if I were to write just as I feel and believe, I should leave out the almost)—had nothing of the *convulsionary* about it: it was quiet and continuous—just the same when she was better, and when she was worse, through the nights that she could not sleep for coughing, and the days that found her always a little weaker: and it left her mind free to think of others, and to invent many ways of saving trouble to her mother and Giulia, and to find little odds and ends of work that she was still able to do.

Her poor mother still clung to hope, and was always trying to make out that Ida was better, or at least that she was going to be better as soon as the weather changed, or when she had taken some new medicine. When she talked in this way it used to make Ida a little sad; still she seldom said anything directly to discourage her mother, but only would say, "It will be as the Lord pleases: He knows what He does: perhaps He sees that if I lived I should do something wicked." One day, as we sat about her bed, where she soon began to spend most of her time, and her mother and Giulia were talking about her recovery, she said, "Perhaps it would be better that I should not recover: I can never be well, really: but still, let it be as the Lord will." "Have courage, Ida," said Giulia;

* The Italics after these are Francesca's. I have marked the sentences here for after reference in *Our Fathers.*[1] [J. R.]

[1] [There were, however, no Parts of *Our Fathers Have Told Us* after this date; for the scheme of the intended continuation of the series, see *Bible of Amiens,* Appendix iii. (Vol. XXXIII.).]

and her mother, "Do not be afraid, my child." "I am not afraid," she answered. "I think," I said, "that God gives you courage always." "Yes, yes," she answered, with a very bright smile: "blessed are His words!"—and the poor mother went out of the room. Then Ida looked earnestly into my face and said, "There are tears in your eyes, but there are none in mine." I asked her if she wished to die. She thought a little while, and then said that she had no choice in the matter; if it were the Lord's will that she should die soon, she was very happy to go; or if He wished her to recover, she should be happy just the same; and if, instead, it pleased Him that she should live a long time as ill as she was then, still she wished nothing different. And she ended with a very contented smile, saying the words which she had said so often—"He knows what He does."

Another time, when I feared that she suffered with her constant and wearisome cough, she said, "It does not seem to me that I suffer at all; I am so happy that I hardly ever remember that I am ill." Her spirit never failed for a moment; there were none of those seasons of depression which almost always come with a long illness. When others asked her how she was able to have so much patience, she always answered simply, "God gives it to me." A few words like these I can remember, but not many, and they were nearly all in answer to our questions. She never spoke much about her own feelings, physical or mental, and it was more in the wonderful lighting up of her face, when she listened to the Bible, than in what she said, that I saw how much she enjoyed.

All her taste for "pretty things" continued, and she liked to have everything about her as bright and cheerful as possible. She had a friend who used to send her, by my means, beautiful flowers almost every day, which were a great comfort to her, and it was always my work to arrange them on the little table by her bedside. When she was too tired and weak for her sewing, or her books of devotion, she used to lie and look at these flowers. Edwige (whom every one knows, who knows me, and of whom it is enough to say that she is a good and pious widow who lives in the country, and who was very fond of Ida)[1] used to bring down continually such things as she liked from the country,—long streamers of ivy, and branches of winter roses and laurustinus, and black and orange-coloured berries from the hedges,—and these were a continual amusement to her. As long as she was strong enough, she used to like to arrange them herself with the same fanciful taste which she had always shown in my painting room, ornamenting with them her crucifix, which hung near the head of the bed, and her Madonna, and one or two other devotional pictures; and what were left she used to twine about the framework of her bed itself, so that sometimes she looked quite as if she were in an arbour. I think she obeyed literally the gospel precept, to be "like men waiting for their Lord." The poor little room and its dying inmate presented always a strangely festive appearance, as if they were prepared for the soon expected arrival of one greatly loved and longed for.

The window was always opened at the foot of the bed,—*for light and air* she *would* have, and her dress and the linen of her bed were always as

[1] [For notices of Edwige in *Roadside Songs of Tuscany*, see the Index below, p. 335.]

neat and clean as possible, to the credit of her mother be it spoken, who did the washing herself, with the help of her good little servant-maid Filomena. And the pretty flowers and green branches, and the fresh smell of the country which came from them, and in the midst of it all, Ida's wonderfully happy face, made up as bright and inspiriting a scene as I ever came near. I know that I used to think it better than going to church, to go into Ida's room.

There was a good American lady in Florence at that time, who did not know Ida; but she had lost a little daughter herself by the same complaint, and having heard of Ida's illness, she used to send her her dinner every day, choosing always the best of everything from her own table;* and this she continued to do as long as Ida lived. This good lady's children went constantly to see her, and always asked to be taken there, though they could not speak Italian. Children usually avoid a sick room, but she was so lovely and peaceful in appearance, that she seemed to impress them more as a beautiful picture than anything else, and they were always glad to go up all the stairs to look at her. I remember the first time that they ever went there, the youngest little girl sat contemplating her for a few minutes with a sort of wonder, and then asked me, aside, if she might kiss her.

I have said before that Giulia was engaged to be married. Her lover lived at Rome, and he was very anxious to marry her as soon as possible. She however was not willing to leave her sister while she was so ill; and at first I felt as she did, and did not wish her to go away from Ida. But there were some reasons why it seemed better that she should soon be married. Her lover, who was strongly and devotedly attached to her, was living quite alone and among strangers (he was a Piedmontese), and he seemed hardly able to support his long continued solitude. There was another reason, stronger yet. The doctor had forbidden Giulia to sleep in the same room with Ida, and she and little Luisa had been obliged to return into the dark closet where they had slept before. Giulia was looking poorly, and had a cough, and seemed very much as Ida had been a year ago; and we all wished that she might change scene and climate before it was too late. Still we all shrank from laying on Ida, in her last days, this further burden of separation from her dearly loved, only sister.

It was at once a relief and a surprise to me when, one day that they had left me alone with Ida, she began to speak to me of Giulia's marriage, and asked me to use all my influence with Giulia, and with her mother, to bring it about as soon as possible. She said that she had now only one wish left in the world, and that was, to see her sister happily married, and that it troubled her to see the marriage put off from one day to another. Ida's word turned the scale, and in a few days the whole household was immersed in preparations for the wedding. I ought to say that the household was much reduced in number since I had first known the family. One of the little orphans had been adopted into a childless family, another had gone to live in the country with his maternal grandmother. The prettiest and sweetest of them all, little Silvio, had died, to the great sorrow of all the family, at the time when Ida was at Viareggio;

* Pretty—as if for her own dead daughter. [J. R.]

so that now only Luisa was left at home. The girl's brother, Telemaco, had obtained some sort of government employment in a distant part of the country, so that he too was gone. And only the old people, and Luisa and Filomena, would be left to take care of Ida after Giulia should be married.

And now it seemed as if all poor Ida's hopes for this world, which had been so cruelly cut short, were renewed again in her enjoyment of Giulia's happiness. One of the prettiest pictures that I have in my mind of Ida, is as she sat upright in her bed, propped up with pillows, her face all beaming with affectionate interest, and *did her last dressmaking work on Giulia's wedding gown.* She was very close to Heaven then, lying, as it were, at the gate of the Celestial City, and at times it seemed as if the light already began to shine on her face. Still, as long as she stayed in the world, she did what she could, and as well as she could, for those about her, and could put her heart into the smallest trifle for any one whom she loved.

She seemed always in haste for the wedding day, and often told me how much she wished for it; I think that she was afraid she might not live to see it. The day came at last,—a soft beautiful day of the late autumn, with plenty of flowers still in blossom to ornament the table, and the air still warm enough to make open windows pleasant. We had a very pretty simple wedding at S. Lorenzo, and then went back to the house, where we found Ida up and sitting in the easy chair, which she had not occupied for a long time. She was so excited and interested that a slight colour had come back into her face, and she looked as well as ever, and prettier than ever. Poor Giulia, laughing and crying and blushing all at once, hurried up to Ida, embraced her, and hid her face on her shoulder. Ida folded her closely in her arms for a minute or two without speaking, and I knew by the look in her face that she was giving thanks in silence, and praying for a blessing on this dear sister. When the others went into the next room, where the wedding breakfast was already set out on the table, they invited me to go with them, but Ida said, "Let Signora Francesca stay with me for a few minutes, I want her to do something for me, and then she will come." I could not imagine what Ida wanted, she was so little in the habit of wanting anything; but I stayed, and as soon as she was satisfied that they had shut the door, she said to me, looking very pleased and triumphant, "Do you know, Signora Francesca, I am going to the table myself! I have always meant to go, when Giulia was married; and now you will help me to dress, will you not?" I was almost frightened, but I helped her arrange the lavender-coloured woollen dress which was her best,—*I knew now why she had spent so much time, during the first months of her illness, in altering and trimming it,**—and tied her white silk handkerchief about her neck; and then she took my arm, and we went into the other room together.

There was a subdued exclamation of surprise from the few friends gathered about the table, and then all voices were hushed, as she came in slowly, looking rather like a vision from the other world, with her wonderful eyes and her white illuminated face and her beautiful smile,

* Think, girl-reader, of the difference between that dress and a fashionable bridesmaid's bought one! [J. R.]

and sat down at the table opposite to her sister. But they were soon laughing and talking again, and complimenting Ida on her improved health, which enabled her to come to the table, and hoping that she would soon be well enough to come there every day; and Giulia's husband said that when she was a little better she must come to Rome and stay with them, where the air would be sure to do her good. I think she knew very well that she should never sit at the family table again, but she would not say anything to sadden their gaiety: so she thanked them all, and took a little morsel of cake, and sat looking very earnestly and affectionately at her sister; and pretty soon she grew tired, and all the loud voices jarred on her, so I led her back to the chamber. "This was the last wish I had," she said, after we were alone, and she had sunk back wearily into her easy chair, "to be with Giulia on her wedding day! and now, if you please, tell me all about the wedding in the church." I described it to her as minutely as I could, and she seemed much interested. Then she wanted me to read her a chapter in the Bible, as was my habit, and after that I left her. At the head of the stairs I found myself waylaid by Giulia, who clung around my neck, weeping bitterly at parting with me, and entreated me over and over again to be good to Ida after she should be gone away.

The next day when I went there Giulia was gone, and Ida was quite weak and tired. She was never well enough to sit up again, and she faded away very slowly. The second day a letter came from Giulia, written almost in the first hour of her arrival in Rome, full of overflowing affection. Ida shed some tears at this, but not many; and she answered it with her own hand, weak as she was. One day, soon after this, as I was sitting beside Ida, she asked her mother to leave us alone for a few minutes, as she wished to speak to me. "Come a little nearer," she said, when we were alone; and I drew up close to her side. She took my hand, and looked at me solemnly and a little sadly. "I have something," she said, "that I have wanted to say to you for a long time: you are very fond of me, Signora Francesca?" I told her that I had always been so. "Yes," she said, "but you are much more fond of me since I have been ill, than you were before, and you grow more so every day; I see it in a great many ways." "That," I said, "is no more than natural; I could not help it if I would." "And lately," she continued, "*I have begun to be a little afraid that you may like me too much!*" "Dear Ida, what do you mean?" "It is a great comfort to me," she said, "to have you with me; but sometimes I am afraid that if I should die, you might grieve about it, and in that case I would rather that you should not come so often; I could not bear the idea of being a cause of sorrow to you. Now, I want you to promise that if I die, you will not be unhappy about me." "I promise you," I said, "that I will think of you always as one of the treasures laid up in Heaven, and I shall always thank God that He has let us be together for so long. I shall not be unhappy, but all the happier as long as I live, for the time that I have passed in this room." Her face brightened. "Then I am quite happy," she said; "that was what I wanted: now let my mother come back." And having once satisfied herself that I was prepared, she never spoke to me of dying again.

One day a good lady came to see her, who had known her before her illness, and she brought her a pretty little silver medallion of the Madonna, which gave her great pleasure, and she never let it go out of her sight afterwards, as long as she lived. By this time Ida had become so ill that she was never able to lie down, but had to sit up day and night upright in her bed, supported by pillows, and her cough allowed her to sleep but very little. The lady was much troubled to see her in this state, and to comfort her, she told her that it was necessary to suffer much in this world if one would attain to happiness in the other. Ida answered, "That *is* my trouble! I *ought*, I suppose, to suffer a little, but I do not. *I lie here in the midst of pleasure.*" This lady had brought her a little book which she called the book of her remembrances, in which she had copied many prayers and pious reflections from various old authors; and because Ida seemed pleased with some portions which she read to her, she left the book with her, saying that when she had done with it, she might return it to her. Ida kept this book for several days, so that I once asked for it, feeling a little uneasy, as I knew the lady held it very precious. She said that she should like to keep it a little longer, and I did not hurry her. Two days afterwards she gave it back to me, asking me to give it to the lady, and to ask her pardon for having kept it so long. "I have added a little remembrance of my own," she said; "I have copied for her my favourite prayer: I could only write a few words at the time, and that is why I have kept the book for so many days." I looked at it; it was written in a clear round hand, with great pains. It was a prayer for the total conformity of one's will to the will of God. I know that the lady for whom it was written has kept it always as a great treasure.

"You are happy," Ida said to me once, "for you are strong, and can serve the Lord in many ways." "I hope," I said, "that we may both be His servants, but your service is a far more wearisome one than mine." To which she answered, with that bright courageous smile of hers, "What God sends is never wearisome,"—and I know that she felt what she said. At another time, in thanking me for some little service that I had done for her, she said that "I did her much good." "You do more for me," I answered. She looked a little puzzled for a minute; then, as she took in my meaning, she said, "It is not I who do you good; this peace which you see in me is not mine. I am nothing but a poor human body with a great sickness, which I feel just as any one else would; this peace is of God."

About the middle of December she received the communion. As she waited for the arrival of the sacrament she thought she saw a beautiful rainbow, which made an arch over her bed, and she saw it so plainly that she called her mother to look at it, but Signora Martina could see nothing. When she found that it was visible to no eyes but her own, she did not speak of it again to any one; only when I asked her about it she acknowledged that she had seen it, and that it remained for about a quarter of an hour: adding, "It is well,—it means peace."

She feared that it might be somewhat of a shock to her sister to hear that she had taken the communion, as it might give her the idea that she was worse; and she wrote her the news with her own hand, thinking that she could tell her more gently than any one else could do. I saw

Giulia's answer to this letter. "My dearest sister," she wrote, "I always knew that you were more fit for Heaven than Earth, and I only wish I were as near it as you are!"

One day a little girl brought her an olive branch, as she said, to remind her of the one which the dove brought to Noah in the ark: probably the child did not know how *her* olive branch came, like the dove's, as a token of deliverance close at hand; but Ida understood the significance of the present, and had the olive branch placed over her Madonna, where it seemed to be a great comfort to her, and it stayed there until she died. Whenever the room was dusted she used to say, "Be careful and do not hurt my olive branch!"

She still loved hymns and religious poetry, and learned by heart many of the verses which I used to sing or recite to her. She liked best those which were most grand and triumphant. One day, as I was leaving the room, I heard her saying to herself in a whisper those beautiful lines of S. Francesco d'Assisi:—

> "Amore, Amor Gesù, son giunto a porto,
> Amore, Amor Gesù, da mi conforto."

She was unselfish in her happiness as she had been in her sorrow. One day I found her worse, much distressed and agitated: she was sitting up in bed with her prayer-book, but there was none of the beautiful peacefulness in her face which always accompanied her prayers,—her eyes looked positively wild with grief and terror. With some difficulty (for she had little voice then), she explained to us her trouble, entreating earnestly Edwige and myself to help her with our prayers. One of her neighbours, a very wicked and profane old woman, who had been generally avoided by all the others, had met with a sudden and fearful accident, and had been carried insensible to the hospital, where her death was hourly expected. Ida, as her mother afterwards told me, had not slept all night, but had continued in earnest and incessant prayer for this woman's forgiveness,* and so she continued during the few hours until she died, asking of all whom she saw the charity of a prayer. The poor woman died without speaking, and only in the next world shall we know whether Ida's prayers were heard. I have never felt as if they could have been altogether wasted.

Her charity took in the smallest things as well as the greatest.† Often, after leaving her, I used to go to see a young lady, a friend of hers and mine, who was an invalid just then, and she too liked flowers, so that sometimes when I went to Ida's room I would have two bunches of flowers in my hands, one for her and one for our friend; Ida would always wish to see them both, that she might be sure her friend's flowers were quite as pretty as her own, and if there were anything very

* All this is dreadfully puzzling to me,—but I must not begin debating about it here, only I don't see why one wicked old woman should be prayed for more than another. [J. R.]

† Yes, of course; but the worst of these darling little people is, that they usually can't take in the greatest as well as the smallest. Why didn't she pray for the King of Italy instead of the old woman? I don't understand. [J. R.]

beautiful in her bunch, she would take it out and put it in the other. And yet, if she cared for anything in this world, she cared for flowers: her love for them amounted to a passion.* Every day she would ask me particularly about all our acquaintance who were ill, or in any trouble; and sometimes it seemed as if she cared more for their small ailments, than for her own deadly illness.

Christmas Day came, her last Christmas in this world; and Ida and I arranged between us to have a little party in her room! Of course it was very little and quiet, because she was so weak then. There were only the old people, Luisa, and her little sister (the one who had been adopted into the family), Filomena and myself. But the room looked very pretty; Ida said it was the festa *del Gesù Bambino*, and she had her little picture of the Gesù Bambino taken down from the wall and placed on the table beside her, all surrounded with flowers and green branches. I arranged all this under her superintendence, and then set the table for breakfast close to her bed, that the family might eat with her once more. How pleased and happy she was while all this was going on! She was a child to the last in her enjoyment of little things. Then they came in; but before breakfast she would have me read S. Luke's story of the Nativity, and sing the old Christmas hymn—

"Mira, cuor mio durissimo,
Il bel Bambin Gesù,
Che in quel presepe asprissimo,
Or lo fai nascer tu!" [1]

Then we all ate together; even Ida's tame ringdove, her constant companion during her illness, who was standing on the pillow close to her cheek, had his meal with the rest.

And after that came a great surprise; Ida put her hand under the sheet, and drew out, one by one, a little present for each of the family. But this was a little too much, being so unexpected; and when she gave her father his present, which consisted of some linen handkerchiefs, the poor old man, after vainly trying once or twice to speak, dropped his head with an uncontrollable burst of sobs, and was obliged, in a few minutes, to leave the room; and so ended Ida's last festa. The next day I found her hemming one of the handkerchiefs for her father; it was the last work that she ever did, and it took her several days to finish it, a few stitches at a time.

I am coming to the end of my story now. Soon after that, she began to be much worse, and we saw that we had her for only a few days. *On the last day of the old year* I was with her in the morning, and found her very weak, and, I feared, suffering much, though she made no complaint, and seemed to enjoy my reading as much as usual. I left her, promising to come again the next morning. About three o'clock the same day,

* Just the reason why she wouldn't take the best. I understand *that*. [J. R.]

[1] [For this, "the last song of Ida," see *Roadside Songs of Tuscany*; below, p. 197.]

as I sat at work, little Luisa came to my room, and said that Ida had fallen asleep, and they could not waken her. I immediately went home with the child, and Edwige also came with us, as she was in my room at the time. It was a dark, wet, gloomy day, but not cold; and we found Ida's room all open to the air, as usual. I had feared, from what the child said, to find Ida dead; but instead of that she was really in a deep and most peaceful sleep, sitting upright in the bed, with her face to the window. Everything about her was white; but her face was whiter than the linen—at least it appeared so, being so full of light; only her lips had still a rosy colour. Her dark hair fell over her shoulders, and one hand lay on the outside of the sheet; her hand did not look wasted any more, but was beautiful, as when I used to paint it.

We all stood about her in tears, fearing every minute lest her quiet breathing should cease—for her mother had been vainly trying for some time to awaken her, and none of us knew what this long sleep meant—when all at once the sun, which had been all day obscured, just as it was setting, came out from behind a cloud; and shining through the open window at the foot of the bed, framed in a square of light the beautiful patient face, and the white dress, and the white pillow, while the weeping family about the bed remained in shadow. I never saw anything so solemn and overpowering; no one felt like speaking; we stood and looked on in silence, as this last ray of light of the year 1872, the year which had been so full of events to Ida, after resting on her for a few minutes, gradually faded away.

Soon afterwards she awoke, and seemed refreshed by her sleep, and said she had been dreaming she was in a beautiful green field.[1] After this she slept much, which was a mercy; and would often drop asleep through weakness, even while we were speaking to her. In these last days she wanted me always to read her passages from S. Paul; and the epistles of S. Paul have become so associated with her in my mind, that I can never read them without thinking of her, as I am constantly coming to some of her favourite verses. I see now, as I look at these verses, that they are, without exception, those that express our utter helplessness, and the perfect sufficiency of the Saviour; two truths—or rather one, for they cannot be separated—which had become profoundly impressed on her mind, and which she, as it were, lived on during her illness.

About a week before her death, as Edwige was sitting alone by her, she said, "This can last but a very few days now: pray for me, that I may have patience for the little time that remains." Then she spoke of L——, and said that she could not bear to hear people say, that he had caused her death by deserting her. "It was my own wish," she said, "to part from him; and it would have been better if we had parted before." * With her usual care for his good name, of which he was himself so careless, she said nothing of the reason for which she had wished to part from him, but let it pass as a caprice of her own. Then she asked Edwige, as a last favour, to help Filomena dress her for her grave,

* Take care, girl-reader, that you do not take this for pride. She is only thinking of shielding her lover from blame, so far as truth might. [J. R.]

[1] [For a reference to this passage, see below, p. 230.]

in case that her mother should not feel strong enough to do so. She seemed to shrink from the idea of being put into the hands of a stranger.

After this she often asked for the prayers of those about her, and always that she might have patience until the end. She never asked us to pray for the safety of her soul, for she was half in heaven already, and the time for doubting and fearing was over. I think it was on Friday that she spoke to her mother about her funeral, and tried to arrange everything so as to save trouble and expense to the family. That night she was in much pain, and not able to sleep, which greatly distressed her mother; but she said, "Why do you mind, mother? I shall have all eternity to rest in." On Saturday morning, as usual, she asked me to read her something of S. Paul. I read the fourth chapter of the second epistle to the Corinthians. As I came to the verse, "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, 'I believed, and therefore have I spoken,' we also believe, and therefore speak," I looked up to see if she were able to attend, and I saw her face all lighted up, and she whispered, or rather her lips formed the word "beautiful." But as I came to the end of the chapter, that unconquerable drowsiness came over her, and she fell asleep. I never read to her again.

On Sunday she was worse—slept almost all the time; and when she was awake, wandered a little in her mind, thinking that she saw birds flying about the room. On Monday, when I went to her, I found her asleep; and though I stayed some little time, she did not awake. I knew she would be disappointed not to see me; so, as I had some things to do, I went away, telling her mother that I would come back soon. On my return I was met on the stairs by one of the neighbours, who had been watching for me at her door. "She is worse!" she said; "I wanted to tell you, for fear that it should shock you too much to see her, without knowing it beforehand." I thanked her, and hurried up to Ida. The priest, who had been very kind all through her illness, was sitting by the bed, and a crucifix and prayer-book were lying on it by Ida's side. She had changed much in the one hour since I had left her sleeping so quietly. The peculiar unmistakable look of death was on her face, and she seemed much distressed for breath. I paused at the door, and the priest asked me to come in. Ida turned her eyes, from which the light was fast fading, toward me, and the old smile came back to her face as bright and courageous as ever. "God gives you courage still, I see, Ida!" I said to her as I came up to her side. She could not speak, but she nodded her head emphatically. Then she made a sign for me to sit down in my old place, near the foot of the bed, where her eyes could rest on my face; and there I sat through almost the whole of that sad yet beautiful day. Once she made a sign for me to come near her; I thought she had something to say to me, and I put my face close to hers, that I might understand her; but she did not speak, only kissed me twice over. That was her farewell to me.

All day long she alternated between sleep and periods of great distress for breath. Towards the end of the day, as she awoke out of a sort of stupor, her face became very beautiful, with a beauty not of this world. It was that *bellezza della morte*, which is seen sometimes in great saints, or in innocent little children, when they are passing away. I cannot

describe it. I suppose it is what the old Jews saw in the face of S. Stephen, when it became "like the face of an angel." Certainly it was more like heaven than anything else we ever see in this world. She looked at me, then at her mother, with a smile of wonderful joy and intelligence; then raised her eyes towards heaven with a look, as it were, of joyful recognition,—perhaps she saw something that we could not,—and her face was in a manner transfigured, as if a ray of celestial light had fallen on it. This lasted for a few minutes, and then she dropped asleep. When evening came on, they sent for me to come home. She seemed a little better just then, and when I asked if she were willing that I should leave her, she nodded and whispered, "*To-morrow morning.*" About seven o'clock that evening, without any warning, she suddenly threw her arms wide open, her head dropped on her bosom,—and she was gone.

The next morning, when I went to the house, she was laid down on the bed, for the first time for two or three months. The heap of pillows and cushions and blankets and shawls had all been taken away, and she lay looking very happy and peaceful, with a face like white wax. Even her lips were perfectly white at last; they were closed in a very pleasant smile. I went into the next room, where the family were all sitting together. The poor mother gave me a letter which Ida had written and consigned to Lena (an intimate friend of hers), a few days before her death, with directions to give it to her mother as soon as she should be gone. In this letter she disposed of what little she had in money and ornaments.

She had never bought any ornament for herself, but several had been given to her, and she divided them, as she best could, among her relations and friends. Most of the letter, however, was taken up with trying to comfort her father and mother. She thanked them with the utmost tenderness for all that they had done for her, especially in her illness, and entreated them not to mourn very much for her; reminding them that, if she had lived a long life, she would probably have suffered much more than she had done. She left many affectionate and comforting messages to her brother, her sister, and various friends. She also left many directions for her burial,—among others, that a crucifix, which her dear old friend Edwige had given her on New Year's Day, should be placed on her bosom, and buried with her. So the letter must have been written *after* New Year, at a time when she suffered greatly, and was too ill and weak almost to speak; and yet, not only did she enter into the smallest particulars (even to leaving her black dress to Filomena, and *advising her to alter the trimming on some other clothes, so as not to spend for the mourning*), but *she even took the pains to write the whole letter in a very large round hand, that her mother, whose sight was failing, might read it without difficulty.* A little money which she had in the savings bank, and which was to have been her dowry, she left to her beloved sister Giulia. To me she left a ring and some of her hair. I read this letter aloud amid the sobs of the family, which came the more as each one heard his, or her, own name recorded with so much affection. We went back into her room, and her mother opened the little drawer in the table at the head of the bed, where she had kept her few treasures, and took out

the little ring which she had left me, and put it on my finger without speaking, as we stood by Ida's side. Then I went away to find some flowers—the last flowers that I was ever to bring to Ida! *The first lilies of the valley came that day,* and I was glad to have them for her, for they were her favourite flowers.

Late in the day I went back to sit, for the last time, a little by Ida's bedside. Edwige and Filomena had dressed her then for her grave, and very lovely she looked. She wore a simple loose dress of white muslin; her beautiful dark hair, parted in the middle, was spread over her shoulders and bosom, and covered her completely to the waist. Edwige's crucifix and a small bunch of sweet flowers lay on her bosom. Her little waxen hands, beautiful still as in life, were not crossed stiffly, but retained all their flexible grace, as they lay one in the other, one of them holding a white camellia. A large garland, sent by the same friend who had for so long supplied her with flowers, was laid on the bed, enclosing her whole person as in a frame. Sometimes these garlands are made altogether of white flowers for a young girl; but Ida had been always so fond of bright colours, and of everything cheerful and pleasant, and her passing away had been so happy, that it seemed more natural in her garland to have roses and violets and jonquils, and all the variety of flowers. There was not one too gay for her! Six wax torches in large tall candlesticks, brought from the church, stood about her; the good priest sent those.

We all sat down beside her for a while, and I felt as if I should never be ready to leave her; but at last it grew late, and I had to come away. For a minute at the door I turned back, and wiped away the tears, that I might take one more look at the beautiful face smiling among the flowers; then I passed on, and my long, happy attendance in that chamber was over. That night, when she was carried away, the artist who had long wished to paint her portrait followed her to S. Caterina, where all the dead of Florence are laid for one night, and went in and drew her likeness by lamplight. All the servants employed about the establishment gathered about ber, wondering at her beauty.

Ida is buried in the poor people's burying ground at Trespiano. Edwige went to see her grave a while ago, and found it all grown over with little wild "morning glories." There is a slab of white marble there, with the inscription, "Ida, aged nineteen, fell asleep in the peace of the Lord, 20th January, 1873"; and over the inscription is carved a dove with a branch of olive in its beak. I miss her much, but I remember my promise to her, and there has never been any bitterness in my grief for Ida. She does not seem far away; she was so near Heaven before, that we cannot feel that she has gone a very long journey.

II

ROADSIDE SONGS OF TUSCANY

(1884–1885)

Beatrice di Pian degli Ontani

ROADSIDE SONGS OF TUSCANY.

TRANSLATED AND ILLUSTRATED BY
FRANCESCA ALEXANDER,

AND EDITED BY
JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.,
HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, HONORARY FELLOW OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART, OXFORD.

COMPLETE IN TEN PARTS, WITH TWENTY ILLUSTRATIONS.

GEORGE ALLEN,
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.
1885.

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[*Bibliographical Note.*—This work was originally published in Ten Parts, each with its separate title-page.

Part I. (issued April 1884).—The title-page was as follows:—

> Roadside Songs of Tuscany. | Translated and Illustrated by | Francesca Alexander, | and edited by | John Ruskin, LL.D. | Honorary Student of Christ Church, Honorary Fellow of Corpus Christi College, | and Slade Professor of Fine Art, Oxford. | Part I. | The Story of Lucia. | With author's and editor's Preface, | and Two Illustrations | (Beatrice of the Field of the Alder-trees. | Santa Zita: the Miracle at the Well). | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1884.

Medium quarto, pp. 1–26. On the reverse of the title-page was the imprint, "Printed by | Hazell, Watson, and Viney, Limited, | London and Aylesbury." Author's Preface, pp. 1–6; Editor's Preface, pp. 7–15; p. 16, blank; "Introductory. The Story of Lucia," pp. 17–25; p. 26, blank.

Issued in cream-coloured hand-made paper wrappers, with the title-page (enclosed in a single ruled frame) repeated upon the front; the words "*Price Seven Shillings*" being added below the rule. These remarks apply also to the remaining Parts, except that the setting upon the wrappers of Parts viii. and x. varied slightly from that upon the title-pages. Of each Part 2000 copies were printed.

Part II. (issued July 1884).—The title-page (so far as it varied from that of Part I.) was:—

> Part II. | The Ballad of Santa Zita. | With Editor's Notes, | and Two Illustrations | (Santa Zita giving Alms, Santa Zita and the Angel).

Pp. 27–80. "Notes on the Life of Santa Zita," pp. 27–44. Half-title ("The Ballad of Santa Zita"), p. 45. "Life of S. Zita" (so entitled at the head of p. 46), or "The Ballad of Santa Zita" (so on the headlines), pp. 46–75. Postscript, pp. 76–80.

Part III. (September 1884).—The new words on the title-page were:—

> Part III. | Ballad of the Madonna and the Rich Man. The Story of Paolina. | Notes on the Priest's Office, by the Editor. | With Two Illustrations | (The Madonna and the Rich Man, | Going to Church).

Pp. 81–118. Half-title ("The Madonna and the Rich Man"), p. 81. The ballad, pp. 82–89. Postscript, pp. 90–92. "The Story of Paolina," pp. 93–104. "Notes on the Priest's Office," pp. 105–117. Postscript, p. 118.

Part IV. (October 1884).—The new words on the title-page were:—

> Part IV. | Flower of the Pea, by the Editor. The Dove. | The Stories of Isabella and Armida. The Story of Maria and Metilde Seghi. | Postscript, by the Editor. | Thou wilt be content. | With Two Illustrations | (Isabella of L'Abetone. The Lovers' Parting).

Pp. 119–146. "Flower of the Pea," pp. 119–121. "Non vi Maravigliate" and "The Dove," pp. 122, 123. "The Stories of Isabella and Armida," pp. 124–133. "The Story of Maria and Metilde Seghi," pp. 134–141. Postscript, p. 142. "Letter from Angelo to Rosina," p. 143. "How many come" and "Thou wilt be content," pp. 144, 145. Note on the Rispetti, p. 146.

Part V. (January 1885).—The new words on the title-page (besides the altered date) were :—

> Part V. | The Jessamine Window. The Story of Gigia. The Story of Fortunato. | First Part of the Ballad of the Madonna and the Gipsy. | With Two Illustrations | (The Jessamine Window. | The Madonna entering the Gipsy's Hut).

Pp. 147–186. Half-title ("The Jessamine Window"), p. 147. The song, pp. 148, 149. "The Story of Gigia," pp. 150–154. "The Story of Fortunato," pp. 155–167. "The Madonna and the Gipsy," pp. 168–185.

Part VI. (February 1885).—The new words on the title-page are :—

> Part VI. | Second Part of the Ballad of the Madonna and the Gipsy. | Notes on Gipsy Character. By the Editor. The Story of Edwige. | With Two Illustrations | (The Madonna Teaching. | The Gipsy Prophesying).

Pp. 187–224. Half-title ("The Madonna and the Gipsy"), p. 187. The ballad, pp. 188–199. "Notes upon Gipsy Character," pp. 200–208. "The Story of Edwige," pp. 209–223.

Part VII. (April 1885).—The new words on the title-page are :—

> Part VII. | The Colonel's Leave. The Story of Faustina. The Song of Roses. | Translator's Note on her Drawing of the Lord and the Samaritan Woman. | Note on Idealism, by the Editor. The Song of the Shepherds. | With Two Illustrations | (Speak to me, Speak to me, Mouth of Love. | Christ and the Woman of Samaria).

Pp. 225–256. Half-title ("The Colonel's Leave"), p. 225; the song, pp. 226–229. "The Story of Faustina," pp. 230–241. "The Song of Roses," pp. 242, 243. Translator's Note, pp. 244–245. Editor's Note on Idealism, p. 246. Editor's Preface to the Song of the Shepherds, p. 247; the song, pp. 248–255. On p. 256 is "Note to Page 246."

Part VIII. (May 1885).—The new words on the title-page are :—

> Part VIII. | Behold, my heart. The Story of Emilia and her Sister. The Golden Girdle. | Translator's Note to the Song of the Golden Girdle. The Story of | Gemignano Amidei. The Leaves of Maize. The Story of Teresa and Petrucci. | Editor's Note on the Drawing of St. Christopher and the King. | With Two Illustrations | (Saint Christopher and the King. | Christ the Child).

Pp. 257–280. Half-title ("Behold, my heart"), p. 257; the song, pp. 258, 259. "The Story of Emilia and her Sister," pp. 260–264. Half-title ("The Golden Girdle"), p. 265; the song, pp. 266, 267; translator's note, p. 268. "The Story of Gemignano Amidei," pp. 269–271. "The Leaves of Maize," pp. 271, 272. "The Story of Teresa and Petrucci," pp. 274–277. "Editor's Note on the Drawing of St. Christopher and the King," pp. 278, 279.

Part IX. (June 1885).—The new words on the title-page are :—

> Part IX. | The Palace on High. When the Star. The Story of Beatrice and her Sons. | Songs of Country Loves. Hear me, Swallow dear. | The Legend of St. Christopher, by the Translator. | With Two Illustrations | (Saint Christopher at the Cross. | Saint Christopher and the Hermit).

Pp. 281–308. Half-title ("The Palace on High. | When the Star"), p. 281; the songs, pp. 282, 283. "The Story of Beatrice and her Sons," pp. 284–295.

"Songs of Country Loves," pp. 296, 297. Note by the Translator on the Rispetti, p. 298. "Hear me, Swallow dear," p. 299. "The Legend of St. Christopher," pp. 300–308.

Part X. (August 1885).—The new words on the title-page—in addition to "[*All rights reserved*]" below the date—are:—

> Part X. Editor's Note on the Vision of St. Christopher. Editor's Note on "Fatti alla | Finestra." Give me light, Lady. Night-fall. Talk under the Olives, with | Editor's Note. The Story of Edwige's Children. | Evening Prayer. | With Two Illustrations | (Saint Christopher at the Shore. | Saint Christopher in the Ford).

Pp. 309–340. "Editor's Note on the Vision of St. Christopher," pp. 309–314. "Editor's Note on 'Fatti alla Finestra,'" p. 315. "Give me light, Lady" and "Night-fall," pp. 316, 317. "Editor's Note on 'Talk under the Olives,'" p. 318; the Talk, pp. 319–333. "The Story of Edwige's Children," pp. 334–336. Half-title ("Evening Prayer"), p. 337; the song, pp. 338, 339. On p. 340 is the translator's note on the song.

With Part X. was issued the preliminary matter (pp. i.–vii.) for binding up with the Parts in volume form. Half-title (with blank reverse), pp. i.–ii.; Title-page (as here, on p. 39), with imprint on the reverse—"Printed by | Hazell, Watson, and Viney, Limited, | London and Aylesbury"—pp. iii.–iv.; List of Ballads (here, p. 49), p. v.; List of Persons (here, p. 50), p. vi; List of Illustrations (here, with additions, pp. xv., xvi.), p. vii.; p. viii. is blank.

Issued in cloth boards of various colours, lettered on the front "Roadside Songs of Tuscany," and across the back "Roadside | Songs | of | Tuscany." Volumes were issued at £3, 10s.

The Parts, and the volume, are still current. The price of separate Parts has been reduced to 5s., and of the volume to £2, 10s.

The "Ballad of the Madonna and the Rich Man" (in Part III.) was reprinted "by kind permission of Mr. Ruskin" in *The Month: a Catholic Magazine and Review*, November 1886, vol. xxxix. pp. 325–327.

"The Colonel's Leave" (in Part VII.) was reprinted, music by Thomas Wardle, "introducing as a motive the Gregorian Tonus Peregrinus" (Novello and Co.).

Unauthorised editions of *The Roadside Songs of Tuscany* were issued in America in various forms.

In the present volume, the following rearrangements and corrections (in addition to several typographical corrections in the Italian text of some of the verses) have been made:—

The matter by Ruskin is, for uniformity throughout the edition, set in larger type than that of the rest of the book; the Editor's Preface has been placed first; and the fly-titles have been omitted.

The Plates have been reproduced with the artist's title, or without any title (if she so left them). In ed. 1 Ruskin substituted, or added, titles corresponding to those given in his list of illustrations (now incorporated on pp. xv., xvi.).

In the case of some shorter poems, the English text has (for economy of space) been placed under, or beside, the Italian, instead of on an opposite page.

Ruskin's footnotes, in the case of Miss Alexander's letterpress, are distinguished by the addition of "[J. R.]."

On p. 88, verse xx., line 5, "Il Padrone," is restored from the original

for "questo si"; verse xxiv., line 1, "vesta ella" was a misprint in ed. 1 for "vestarella."

On p. 90, verse xxix., line 6, "mente" was a misprint for "niente."

On p. 99, lines 14 and 15, the sense was lost in ed. 1 by the omission of the bracket after "(was" and the misprint of "1290" for "1200." Miss Alexander puts in brackets the words which have to be understood in the Italian.

In the note on p. 122, the quotation marks, in the passage from Milman, have been corrected. In ed. 1 they erroneously came after "upon others."

On p. 123, "seventh" is a correction for "sixth."

On p. 153, in the third line of the second verse, ed. 1 omitted the word "perdoni."

On p. 160, verse 3, line 1, "attaccaranno" is a correction for "attacheranno"; for a verse accidentally omitted in ed. 1, see p. 160 *n.*

The ballad of "The Madonna and the Gipsy," which in ed. 1 was divided between Parts V. and VI., is here printed consecutively; the note which Ruskin appended to the end of Part V. will be found on p. 158.

As explained in the Introduction (p. xxiv.), Miss Alexander's book, from which *The Roadside Songs of Tuscany* included extracts with much additional matter, has also been published in its original form (with the exception of a few missing leaves and of a re-arrangement). The title-page is:—

> Tuscan Songs | Collected, Translated | and Illustrated | By | Francesca Alexander | One Hundred and Eight Photogravures | From the Original Designs | [*Device of The Riverside Press*] | Boston and New York | Houghton, Mifflin, and Company | The Riverside Press, Cambridge | MDCCCXCVII.

Medium quarto, pp. viii. + Plates + pp. 58. Half-title ("Tuscan Songs"), after which the frontispiece; then title-page (with copyright notice on the reverse); Preface (in letterpress), pp. v.–vii. Then come Plates II.–CVIII., reproducing the original leaves of the book. After which comes (pp. 1–58) "A Table showing the Plates in their order with the text accompanying each."

The *original manuscript book* has been dispersed. Ruskin promised to preserve a register of its leaves (see p. 110 *n.*). In October 1883, Mr. Wedderburn drew up such a register for Ruskin, but already a few of the pages were not accessible for description. A careful collation of (1) Mr. Wedderburn's Catalogue, (2) *Roadside Songs*, (3) the American edition, and (4) Miss Alexander's index (reproduced in the latter book), together with a scrutiny of various internal evidence, makes it possible to reconstruct the arrangement.

The book consisted in all of 122 leaves; of these 9 contained full-page drawings, and 113 drawings and words.

The following synopsis shows what each leaf contained (so far as possible), gives an inventory of the American edition, indicates such portions as were used by Ruskin in *The Roadside Songs of Tuscany*, and states (so far as known) where the original leaves are:—

Leaf 1. Frontispiece.—*Used also as frontispiece by Ruskin* (Plate II. in this volume). Plate I. in the American edition.[1] *The drawing is at Oxford.*[2]

" 2. Half-title ("Tuscan Songs"), with almond-blossom. Plate II. (A.).—*The page is at Brantwood.*

[1] Hereafter indicated by "A."

[2] See Vol. XXI. p. 306.

Leaves 3, 4. Author's Preface, with drawings at the beginning (and spray of sarsaparilla) and end. Plates III. and IV. (A.)—*Preface printed by Ruskin* (here, pp. 57–59); *drawings not used. The second page is inserted in this edition* (Plate III.). *Both pages are at Brantwood.*

,, 5, 6. Old Hymn for Christmas (music, English and Italian words), with drawings of olive and narcissus. Plates V. and VI. (A.)—*Words printed by Ruskin* (p. 199).[1] *The music is now added* (p. 197). *The leaves are at Brantwood.*

,, 7. Continuation of the Hymn. Two verses, with a picture of the Holy Family in the Manger at the top.—*This leaf, in Mr. Allen's possession, is not included in the American edition. The concluding verses of the hymn are now added* (p. 199).

,, 8. Gesù Amore. Picture, music, English and Italian words, drawings of winter aconite. Plate VII. (A.)—*The leaf is at Brantwood.*

,, 9, 10. Two Pages of Rispetti.—These leaves (numbered 5 and 6 by Miss Alexander[2]) are missing, and are not included in the American edition. For a reference to one of them, see below, p. 110.

,, 11. "Going to Church" (no title in the original), Rispetto ("Quando passate"). Plate VIII. (A.)—*This leaf, which is at Brantwood, is reproduced entire* (Plate IX.).

,, 12. Rispetti ("You ask me for a song," "O dove with wings of silver," and "I thought that love"). Three songs with drawing of double narcissus. Plate IX. (A.)—*The first two songs were printed by Ruskin* (p. 130); *the third is now added* (p. 237).

,, 13, 14. On St. Anthony.—*These leaves, in Mr. Allen's possession, are not included in the American edition.*

,, 15. "Dio ti salvi bella Signora." Full-page drawing of the Gipsy saluting the Madonna. Plate X. (A.)—*The drawing is in possession of Mrs. Talbot.*

,, 16–32. "The Madonna and the Gipsy." Music (with flowers), English and Italian words (also with flowers throughout), and three leaves with subject-pictures. Of these 17 leaves one—16, musical prelude with drawing of a crocus—is missing; the other 16 are Plates XI.–XXVI. (A.)—*Ruskin prints the text* (here, pp. 153–161) *and reproduces the three leaves with pictures* (here, Plates XIII., XIV., XV.). *The music is now added* (p. 152). *Most of the leaves are at Brantwood; except the three with pictures which are at Oxford.*

,, 33. Hymn to the Madonna.—This leaf (numbered 28 by Miss Alexander) is missing, and not included in the American edition.

,, 34. "Oh, my Lord, with cords who bound thee."—This leaf also (numbered 29 by her) is missing, and not included in the American edition.

,, 35–40. The Madonna and the Rich Man. Music (with flowers at the foot, and a miniature inserted), English and Italian words (with flowers throughout, and one full-page picture, 35). Plates XXVII.–XXXII. (A.)—*Ruskin prints the text* (here, pp. 104–107) *and gives the picture* (Plate VIII., here). *The music is now added* (p. 102). *Four of the pages* (Plates 28, 30, 31, and 32 in the American edition) *are at Girton College, Cambridge. The other two are at Sheffield.*[3]

,, 41. Full-page drawing entitled "Parlami, Parlami bocchin d'amore." Plate XXXIII. (A.)—*Plate XVI. here. The drawing is at Sheffield.*[3]

,, 42, 43. "The Soldier's Love." Music and words with flowers. (The American edition contains the music only, Plate XXXIV.)—*Ruskin prints the Italian and English words* (p. 177) *from the second leaf now missing. The music is now added* (p. 176).

,, 44, 45. Landscape drawing, music, and English and Italian words of a song ("On the ancient walls of Venice"), with flowers. The American edition contains the second page only, Plate XXXV. (containing the end of the music and the words).—*The first leaf is missing; the second is at Brantwood.*

,, 46–57. "Story of the glorious cavalier of Christ, Saint Christopher." English and Italian words of song (with flowers throughout), with a drawing of St. Christopher as headpiece. Plates XXXVI.–XLVII. (A.) On four of the leaves (38, 40, 42, 44) there are subject-pictures above the verses, and there is one full-page picture (46).—*Ruskin omits the ballad but gives the five pages with pictures* (Plates XX.–XXIV.). *Four of the leaves* (Plates XXI.–XXIV.) *are at Oxford;*[4] *the others, at Brantwood.*

[1] The illustration which Ruskin gives (Plate XIX.) is taken from another song: see under 93–97.

[2] For an explanation of the discrepancy in the numbering, see below, p. 47.

[3] See Vol. XXX. p. 249.

[4] See Vol. XXI. p. 307.

Leaf 58. Rispetto, with a drawing of a girl knitting a sock.—*This leaf*—No. 50 in Miss Alexander's numbering—referred to by her below, p. 114—*is in Mr. Allen's possession, and is not included in the American edition. The song is now added* (p. 243).

,, 59. Three Rispetti: English and Italian words with flowers. Plate XLVIII. (A.) —*The words are printed by Ruskin* (p. 214). *The page is at Girton College, Cambridge.*

,, 60. Another song ("When I am dead"), with a picture of a girl at a basin of holy water. Plate XLIX. (A.)—*The song is now added* (p. 237).

,, 61-68. Ballad of "La Samaritana": music, English and Italian words (with flowers throughout), and one full-page picture. Plates L.-LVII. (A.)—*Ruskin gives the picture only* (Plate XVIII.). *It is at Oxford; most of the other leaves are at Brantwood.*

,, 69. "Invitation to become a Cavalier of Christ": music, English and Italian words (with flowers). Plate LVIII. (A.)—*The leaf is at Brantwood.*

,, 70. Picture, English and Italian words of a song. Plate LIX. (A.)—*The page, which is at Oxford, is reproduced entire* (Plate XI.: "*The Lovers' Parting*").

,, 71. Four Rispetti: ("Oh little things," "Oh lad," "Oh sun," and "Love thou didst leave me"). English and Italian words, with flowers. Plate LX. (A.) —*The songs* (*not given by Ruskin*) *are now added* (pp. 237, 239). *The page is at Girton College, Cambridge.*

,, 72. Picture, English and Italian words of a song ("Long time ago"), with flowers. Plate LXI. (A.)—*The song* (*not given by Ruskin*) *is now added* (p. 239).

,, 73. Vignette (head of a peasant) and two Rispetti ("White dove," and "Safe home"): English and Italian words with flowers. Plate LXII. (A.)—*The songs* (*not given by Ruskin*) *are now added* (p. 239).

,, 74. Picture, English and Italian words of a song, with flowers. Plate LXIII. (A.) —*Ruskin reproduces the page entire* (Plate XII.: "*The Jessamine Window*"), *and also repeats the words of the song in letterpress* (p. 142).

,, 75-77. The Shepherd's Serenade. Music (with vignette and leaves), English and Italian words of the song (with flowers). Plates LXIV.-LXVI. (A.)—*Ruskin prints the words* (p. 192). *The leaves are at Brantwood.*

,, 78-92. Life of S. Zita. English and Italian words of the ballad (with flowers throughout). Plates LXVII.-LXXXI. (A.) The first page has a vignette portrait also; page 69 (A.) is a full-page picture of S. Zita on an errand of mercy; page 72, a full-page picture of S. Zita giving alms; page 73 has a half-page drawing of S. Zita in prayer; page 74, a half-page drawing of S. Zita's table miraculously supplied; p. 77, a half-page drawing of S. Zita and the angel; p. 79, a half-page drawing of the miracle at the well.—*Ruskin prints the text* (pp. 80-97); *and reproduces entire three pages with drawings* (Plates IV., VI., and VII.). *Another page is now added* (V.). *Most of the leaves are at Brantwood.*

,, 93-97. Christmas Hymn of Fiumalbo. Music (with flowers), English and Italian words, and on leaf 96 a half-page drawing of the Christ Child. Leaf 93 (containing the first part of the music) is missing; the other leaves are Plates LXXXII.-LXXXV. in the American edition.—*Ruskin gives leaf* 96 *only* (Plate XIX.), *thus giving a portion only of the hymn. The rest is now added* (p. 247). *Leaf* 96 *is at Oxford; the others are at Brantwood.*

,, 98, 99. "On the Happiness of Suffering for Jesus." First page: music (with landscape drawing and flowers) and beginning of English and Italian words. Second page: half-page drawing and continuation of poem (with flowers). Plates LXXXVI., LXXXVII. (A.)—*The leaves are at Brantwood.*

,, 100, 101. "Old People's Sayings." First page: half-page drawing, music (with flowers), and beginning of English and Italian words. Second page: continuation of verses (with flowers and three small vignettes). Plates LXXXVIII., LXXXIX. (A.)—*These two pages are at Girton College, Cambridge.*

,, 102. Rispetti ("How long a time," and "On Monday"). Half-page drawing and English and Italian words of two songs (with flowers). Plate XC. (A.)— *The songs* (*not given by Ruskin*) *are now added* (pp. 241, 128 *n.*). *The leaf is at Brantwood.*

,, 103. Portrait of Isabella of Abetone. Plate XCI. (A.)—*Given by Ruskin* (Plate X.). *Underneath* the portrait are six lines of the second song on 102).—*The drawing is at Oxford.*

,, 104. Rispetti. English and Italian words of two songs (with flowers and two vignettes). Plate XCII. (A.)—*Ruskin prints the songs* (p. 142). *The leaf is at Brantwood.*

,, 105. Rispetti, with flowers and a half-page drawing ("I set a lily at my window high" and "A lighted candle"). Plate XCIII. (A.)—*The songs* (*not given by Ruskin*) *are now added* (p. 241). *The leaf is at Brantwood.*

Leaves 106, 107. "Letter from Angelo to Rosina," with portrait (as headpiece) and flowers decorating the English and Italian words. Plates XCIV., XCV. (A.)—*The leaves are at Brantwood.*

,, 108. Rispetti ("So lowly born," "I am not worthy"), with flowers and a portrait as headpiece. Plate XCVI. (A.)—*The songs not given by Ruskin are now added* (p. 241). *The leaf is at Brantwood.*

,, 109, 110. "Christmas Hymn." Music, English and Italian words (with flowers). Leaf 109 (containing the first part of the music) is missing; leaf 110 is Plate XCVII. (A.)—*The second leaf is at Brantwood.*

,, 111, 112. "Evening Prayer." First page: half-page drawing of a peasant-girl praying, music and English and Italian words (with flowers). Second page: continuation of the verses (with flowers). Plates XCVIII., XCIX. (A.)—*Ruskin prints part of the verses, and the rest is now added* (p. 234). *The second page is at Newnham College, Cambridge.*

,, 113, 114. "I was born when roses were blooming." Leaf 113, music with flower and initial letter (with portrait). Leaf 114, drawing of a piazza and English and Italian words (with flowers). Plates C., CI. (A.)—*Ruskin printed the verses* (here, p. 186). *The music is now added* (p. 184). *The second of the two pages is now added as Plate XVII. This second page is at Girton College, Cambridge.*

,, 115. ("I built a castle," "When I am dead.") Rispetti, with flowers and drawing of Monte Cimone. Plate CII. (A.)—*The songs (not given by Ruskin) are now added* (p. 243). *The leaf is at Brantwood.*

,, 116. ("I want a wife," "Heard you that music.") Rispetti, with flowers and portrait of a girl. Plate CIII. (A.)—*The songs (not given by Ruskin) are now added* (p. 243). *The leaf is at Brantwood.*

,, 117, 118. "Hymn to the Cross." Music, English and Italian words, with flowers. Plates CIV., CV. (A.)—*This hymn was not given by Ruskin, but, as it is referred to* (see p. 59), *is now added* (p. 245). *Leaf* 118 *is in possession of Mrs. Talbot.*

,, 119. "Hymn of Domenico Cerasola," with vignette of Madonna and Child and Cyclamen. Plate CVI. (A.)

,, 120. Sonnets of Domenico Cerasola.—*This leaf is missing and not included in the American edition.*

,, 121. Note on Domenico Cerasola. Plate CVII. (A.) At the foot, under a drawing of a bird's nest is written "La penna fermo e la mia lingua tace. Il foglio chiudoo, addio, restate in pace."—*This leaf is at Brantwood.*

,, 122. Index. Plate CVIII. (A.)

The total number of leaves is, as shown, 122. Miss Alexander's Index, however, enumerates only 108. The Index itself accounts for one more. Also, she does not include the title and preface (3 leaves); nor does she number as pages the 9 full-page drawings. These bring up the number to 121; the missing number is accounted for by the fact that Miss Alexander by a slip had two pages "52."

Ruskin speaks (below, p. 51) of the book containing 109 leaves; he similarly does not count the 9 separate drawings, nor the title, Preface, and Index (4 leaves).

It will be observed that of the total of 122 leaves, the American edition contains 108. The edition was produced without Mr. Allen's co-operation, and four leaves, omitted from it, are in his collection. It may be well to enumerate the 10 missing leaves, in the hope that owners of them will communicate with the editors:—

9, 10. Two Pages of Rispetti.
16. Prelude to the "Madonna and the Gipsy."
33. "Hymn to the Madonna."
34. "Oh, my Lord, with cords who bound thee?"
43. "The Colonel's Leave."—The missing leaf contains the verses printed by Ruskin.
44. "On the Ancient Walls of Venice."—The missing leaf contains the beginning of the music.
93. "Christmas Hymn of Fiumalbo."—The missing leaf contains the beginning of the music.
109. "Christmas Hymn."—So here too.
120. Sonnets of Domenico Cerasola.

By missing leaves are meant leaves neither included in the American edition (1897) nor in Mr. Allen's collection. The present ownership of many more than 10 leaves is, however, unknown to the editors (as the omissions in the foregoing inventory show), and on this subject also information will be welcomed by them.

It will be seen that Ruskin printed only a portion of Miss Alexander's *Tuscan Songs* in his *Roadside Songs of Tuscany*. Of the 106 pages (excluding Index and

title-page) reproduced in the American book, Ruskin gave the contents of about 60. The contents of some 20 other pages are now added.

On the other hand, Ruskin's book includes, besides the editorial matter inserted by himself, much additional matter supplied by Miss Alexander and not contained in the American edition. This is as follows:—

"The Story of Lucia" (below, pp. 62–64).
Note on "The Madonna and the Rich Man" (p. 108).
"The Story of Paolina" (pp. 109–115).
Note on "Stornelli" (pp. 128–129).
"The Stories of Isabella and Armida" (pp. 132–135).
"The Story of Maria and Metilde Seghi" (pp. 136–139).
"The Story of Gigia" (pp. 144–146).
"The Story of Fortunato" (pp. 146–151).
"The Story of Edwige" (pp. 169–175).
"The Story of Faustina" (pp. 179–183).
Note on the drawing of "Our Lord and the Samaritan Woman" (p. 190).
"The Golden Girdle," a rispetto, with note (p. 196).
"The Story of Emilia and her Sister" (pp. 200, 201).
"The Story of Gemignano Amidei" (pp. 202, 203).
"The Leaves of Maize," a rispetto (p. 203).
"The Story of Teresa and Petrucci" (pp. 204, 205).
"The Palace on High" (p. 207).
"When the Star" (p. 207).
"The Story of Beatrice and her Sons" (pp. 208–213).
"Hear me, Swallow dear": an additional rispetto (p. 214).
"The Legend of St. Christopher" (pp. 216–219).
"Give me light, lady," and "Night-fall" (p. 224).
"Talk under the Olives" (pp. 225–231).
"The Story of Edwige's Children" (p. 232).

One or two of the songs not included in the American edition may have been on leaves of the book now missing; but it appears from a passage on p. 213, below, that Miss Alexander sent additional rispetti to Ruskin during the appearance in serial Parts of *Roadside Songs*.

Miss Alexander's stories of her principal models were sent to Ruskin in a little MS. book (p. 55). In printing the stories, he rearranged their order. Hence we find the first story, as given by him, beginning, "We come now" (p. 62). On p. 183 we read, "So now I have finished all the stories," but on subsequent pages we have several more; and there are other confusions of this kind. The explanation is that Miss Alexander, in her stories, followed the order of the drawings in her original MS. book.

She began with Beatrice on the frontispiece (pp. 208–211). Then followed "The story of Paolina" and her sister (the Madonna), on pp. 110–114; "The Story of Gigia" (the Gipsy), pp. 144–146; the Story of Angelo (St. Christopher), on pp. 212–213; the figure of Christ in the "Samaritan Woman," p. 190; the Story of Isabella (the Samaritan Woman), pp. 132–135; the Story of Maria Seghi (model for a drawing not given by Ruskin), pp. 136–139; "We come now to Sta. Zita," p. 62; the Story of Gemignano (model for another figure in one of the Zita drawings), p. 202; the Story of Edwige (who also appears in the Zita picture), pp. 169–175; the Story of Teresa and Petrucci (model for a drawing not given by Ruskin), p. 204; and with the Story of Faustina (pp. 179–183) we "have finished." If the reader follows this list with the order of the drawings in the original MS. book, he will find that it corresponds, and clears up all the obscurities in the text.

The Story of Fortunato (pp. 146–151), and that of "Emilia and her Sister" (p. 200–201), are not included in the above list, as they do not contain references to drawings.

Other drawings by Miss Alexander, allied to those in *Tuscan Songs*, may here be mentioned.

The drawing of "La Madonnina," given as frontispiece to this volume, is in the collection of Mr. M. H. Spielmann.

To Newnham College, Cambridge, Ruskin presented three drawings (besides leaf 112 of the American edition of *Roadside Songs*):—

"Signora Maria Zanchetta" (for whom, see p. 283).
"The Mother of the Orphans" (two girls sitting in a doorway, and one outside at a well).
"The Legend of Santa Marina" (written in English, with a spray of leaves and flowers: see above, p. 305).
"Santa Rosa" (at Brantwood: here reproduced, Plate XXVI.).]

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BALLADS, OR MINOR POEMS

OF WHICH THE WHOLE, OR ILLUSTRATIVE PORTIONS, ARE GIVEN IN THIS WORK

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[1] [As given by Ruskin: for a more detailed list, see above, pp. ix.–xii.]

II

PERSONS

WHOSE CHARACTERS ARE SKETCHED, OR SOME ACCOUNT GIVEN OF PASSAGES IN THEIR LIVES, IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE SONGS OF TUSCANY

(I have thought it better to give the references to them in their proper sequence in the book than in alphabetical order.)

PAGE

1. Beatrice of Pian degli Ontani. (The first general account of her is given in Miss Alexander's preface, in the first number. Added details in Part IX., pp. 208–213, with incidental notice of her two sons, Beppe and Angelo.)
2. Lucia Santi of Le Motte 62
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12. Edwige Gualtieri 169
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14. Emilia and her Sister 200
15. Teresa and Petrucci 204
16. Gemignano Amidei 202
17. Assunta, Edwige's Mother 200
18. Cesira, Edwige's Daughter 229

There are incidental, and very interesting references to other people in nearly every page of Francesca's letters, but there is no need of index to them; part of their charm being in their affectionate association with parts of the more consistently written stories.

THE EDITOR'S PREFACE

BRANTWOOD, *Jan.* 1*st*, 1884.

1. OF the circumstances under which this work came into my possession, account is given in my report to the St. George's Guild for the year 1883;[1] it has been since a matter of much debate with me how to present it most serviceably to those whom it is calculated to serve; and what I am about to do with it, though the best I can think of, needs both explanation and apology at some length.

The book consists of 109 folio leaves,[2] on every one of which there is a drawing, either of figures, or flowers, or both. To photograph all, would of course put the publication entirely out of the reach of people of moderate means; while to print at once the text of the songs and music, without the illustrations, would have deprived them of what to my mind is their *necessary* interpretation; they could not be in what is best of them understood,—even a little understood,—without the pictures of the people who love them. I have determined therefore to photograph, for the present, twenty of the principal illustrations, and to print, together with them, so much of the text as immediately relates to their subjects, adding any further elucidation of them which may be in my own power. But as soon as I have got this principal part of the book well in course of issue, I will print separately all the music, and the little short songs called Rispetti, in their native Italian, and Francesca's

[1] [The Report dated 1884: see Vol. XXX. pp. 73–4.]
[2] [See the Bibliographical Note, above, p. 47.]

English.[1] Meantime, I have presented to Oxford[2] the twelve principal drawings of those which will be published in photograph, and four others to the St. George's Museum at Sheffield.[3] Twenty-five of the leaves of text, illustrated with flowers only, are placed at Oxford[4] for temporary use and examination. These, as well as the greater part of the remainder of the volume, will be distributed between my schools at Oxford, Girton College at Cambridge, the St. George's Museum, and Whitelands College at Chelsea,[5] as soon as I have prepared the text for publication, but this work of course necessitates for some time the stay of the drawings beside me.

2. They are admirably, in most cases, represented by Mr. Hollyer's photographs:[6] one or two only of the more highly finished ones necessarily become a little dark, and in places lose their clearness of line, but, as a whole, they are quite wonderful in fidelity and clearness of representation. Of the drawings themselves I will leave the reader to form his own estimate; merely praying him to observe that Miss Alexander's attention is always fixed primarily on expression, and on the accessary circumstances which enforce it; that in order to let the parts of the design on which its sentiment depends be naturally seen and easily felt, she does not allow any artifices of composition, or charms of light and shade, which would disturb the simplicity of her appeal to the feelings; and that in this restriction, observed through many years, she has partly lost, herself, the sense of light and shade, and sees everything in local colour only: other faults there are, of which, however, be

[1] [This was not done by Ruskin. Examples of the music, and the Rispetti are now added.]

[2] [See Vol. XXI. pp. 306–307.]

[3] [For the four drawings at Sheffield, see Vol. XXX. p. 249.]

[4] [They were subsequently removed; some are now at Brantwood, others are missing: see the Bibliographical Note.]

[5] [For the present distribution of the drawings, so far as it is now ascertainable, see the Bibliographical Note.]

[6] [Mr. Hollyer, of Pembridge Square, well known for his photographs of works by Burne-Jones and others. For the present edition, photogravures have been made.]

they in the reader's estimate few or many, he may be assured that none are of the least weight in comparison with the virtues of the work; and farther, that they ought to be all to him inoffensive faults, because they are not caused either by affectation, indolence, or egoism. All fatal faults in art that might have been otherwise good, arise from one or other of these three things,—either from the pretence to feel what we do not,—the indolence in exercises necessary to obtain the power of expressing the truth,—or the presumptuous insistence upon, and indulgence in, our own powers and delights, because they are ours, and with no care or wish that they should be useful to other people, so only they be admired by them. From all these sources of guilty error Miss Alexander's work is absolutely free. It is sincere and true as the sunshine; industrious, with an energy as steady as that by which a plant grows in spring; modest and unselfish, as ever was good servant's work for a beloved Master.

3. In its relation to former religious art of the same faithfulness, it is distinguished by the faculty and habit of realization which belongs to all Pre-Raphaelism, whether English or American; that is to say, it represents any imagined event as far as possible in the way it must have happened, and as it looked, when happening, to people who did not then know its Divine import; but with this further distinction from our English school of Pre-Raphaelism, that Miss Alexander represents everything as it would have happened in Tuscany to Tuscan peasants, while our English Pre-Raphaelites never had the boldness to conceive Christ or His mother as they would have looked, with English faces, camping on Hampstead Heath, or confused among a crowd in the Strand: and therefore, never brought the vision of them close home to the living English heart, as Francesca is able to show the face of her Lord to the hill peasants at the well of l'Abetone.* The London artists

* Christ and the Woman of Samaria (at Oxford) [Plate XVIII.]. See close of the notice of Lucia, at pp. 63–64 below.

may answer with justice, that the actual life of l'Abetone is like that of Palestine; but that London life is not: to whom it may be again answered, and finally, that they have no business whatever to live in London, and that no noble art will ever be there possible.[1] But Francesca's method of using the materials round her, be it noted, is also wholly different from theirs. They, either for convenience, fancy, or feelings' sake, use, for their types of saint or heroine, the model who happens that day to be disengaged, or the person in whom they themselves take an admiring or affectionate interest. The first heard organ-grinder of the morning, hastily silenced, is hired for St. Jerome, and St. Catherine or the Madonna represented by the pretty acquaintance, or the amiable wife. But Francesca, knowing the histories, and versed in the ways of the people round her for many a year, chooses for the type of every personage in her imagined picture, some one whose circumstances and habitual tone of mind are actually like those related and described in the legend to be illustrated. The servant saint, Zita of Lucca, is represented by a perfectly dutiful and happy farm-servant, who has in reality worked all her life without wages;[2] and the gipsy who receives the forlorn Madonna in Egypt, is drawn from a woman of gipsy blood who actually *did* receive a wounded boy, supposed to be at the point of death, into her house, when all the other women in the village held back; and nursed him, and healed him.[3]

4. Perceiving this to be Miss Alexander's constant method of design, and that, therefore, the historic candour of the drawings was not less than their religious fervour, I asked her to furnish me, for what use I might be able to make of them, with such particulars as she knew, or might with little pains remember, of the real lives and characters of the peasants whom she had taken for her principal

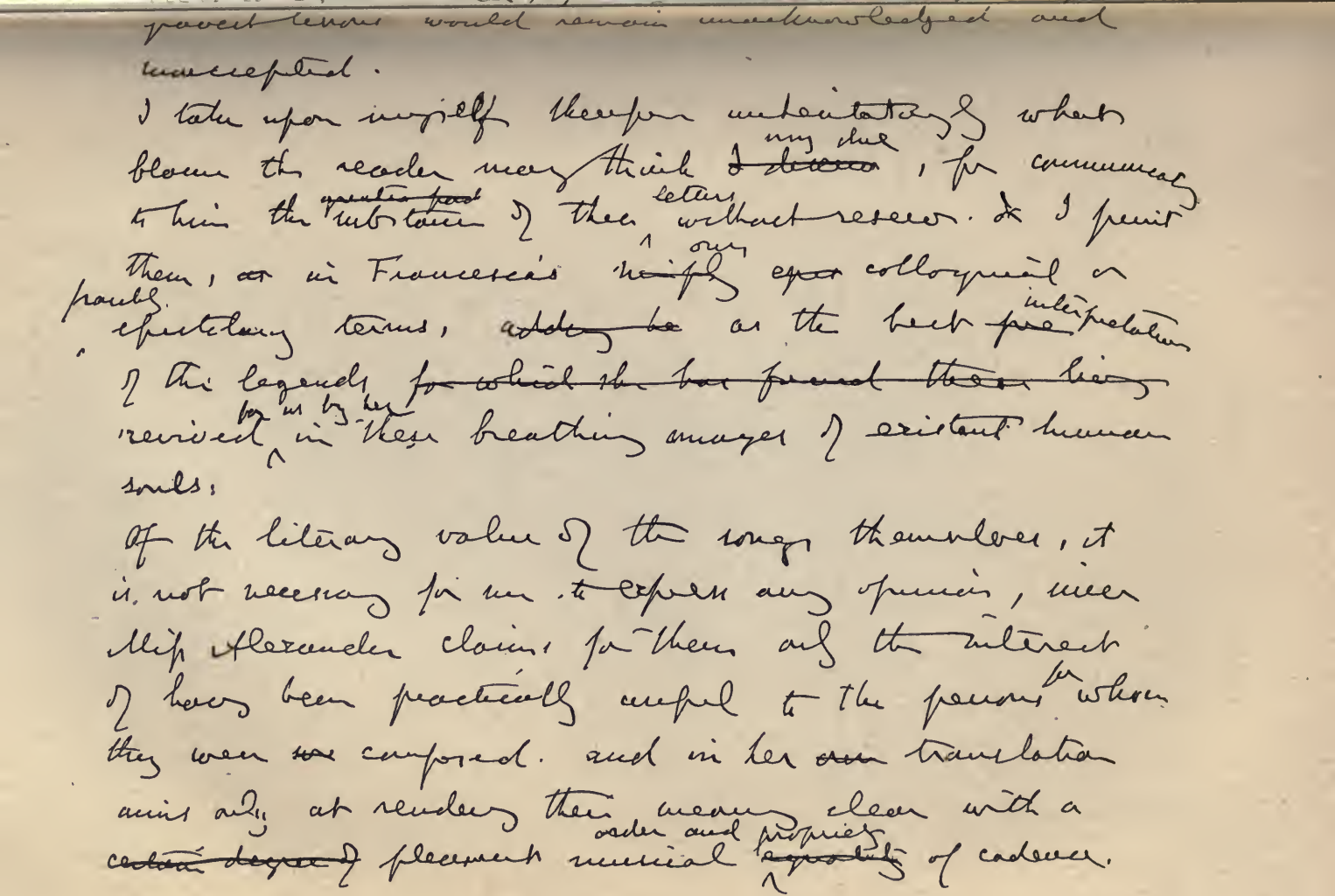
[1] [Compare *Two Paths*, § 137 (Vol. XVI. pp. 371–372); *Ariadne Florentina*, § 226 (Vol. XXII. pp. 456–457); and *Art of England*, § 198 (Vol. XXXIII.).]

[2] [See below, pp. 62–63.]

[3] [See below, p. 145.]

New copy, Editor's Preface · A.

Perceiving this to be Miss Alexander's constant method of design, and that therefore, the historic candour of the drawings was not less than their religious fervour, I asked her to furnish me, for whatever I might be able to make of them, with such particulars as she knew a stranger might with little pains remember of the real lives and characters of the peasants whom she had taken for her principal models. The request was fortunate; since in a very few weeks after it had been presented, Miss Alexander sent me a little white book stamped with the red Florentine lily, containing, in the prettiest imaginable manuscript, a series of biographic sketches of her favorites which are to me in some ways, more valuable than the book which they illustrate, or rather, form now an essential part of it;



A Page of the MS. of the Preface (§§ 4, 5) to "Roadside Songs of Tuscany"

models.[1] The request was fortunate; since in a very few weeks after it had been presented, Miss Alexander sent me a little white book stamped with the red Florentine lily, containing, in the prettiest conceivable manuscript, a series of biographic sketches, which are to me, in some ways, more valuable than the book which they illustrate; or rather, form now an essential part of, without which many of its highest qualities and gravest lessons must have remained unacknowledged and unaccepted.

I take upon myself therefore, unhesitatingly, what blame the reader may think my due, for communicating to him the substance of these letters, without reserve. I print them, in Francesca's own colloquial, or frankly epistolary, terms, as the best interpretation of the legends revived for us by her, in these breathing images of existent human souls.

5. Of the literary value of the songs themselves, it is not necessary for me to express any opinion, since Miss Alexander claims for them only the interest of having been practically useful to the persons for whom they were composed; and, in her translation, aims only at rendering their meaning clear with a pleasant musical order and propriety of cadence.

But it is a point deserving of some attentive notice, that this extremely simple and unexcited manner of verse,

[1] [For Ruskin's re-arrangement of Miss Alexander's stories, see above, p. 48. The following list gives references, in the order of the Plates, to the models described by her :—

Frontispiece: the Madonna (as also on Plates VIII., XIII., etc.)=Emilia, p. 110.
Plate II. Beatrice, Preface and p. 208.
,, IV. Zita=Lucia, p. 62; woman in the background=Edwige, p. 169; man in the foreground=Gemignano, p. 202.
,, IX. Going to church; the girl=Paolina, p. 110; the man=her father, p. 114.
,, X. Isabella, p. 132.
Plates XI. and XII. The girl=Paolina, p. 114.
,, XIII., XIV., XV. Gipsy=Gigia, p. 144.
Plate XVI. The girl=Paolina, p. 114.
,, XVII. One of the girls here=Faustina, p. 179.
,, XVIII. The Woman of Samaria=Isabella, p. 132; Christ is ideal, p. 190.
Plates XX.–XXIV. Christopher=Angelo, p. 212.
Plate XXV. Polissena, see p. 259.
,, XXVI. Santa Rosa, see p. 325.]

common to both the ballads and their translations, results primarily from the songs being intended for, and received as, the relation of actual facts necessary to be truly known; and not at all as the expression of sentiment, fancy, or imagination.

6. And they correspond in this function, and in their resultant manner, very closely to early Greek ballad in the lays of Orpheus and Hesiod,—and indeed to Greek epic verse altogether, in that such song is only concerned with the visible works and days of gods and men; and will neither stoop, nor pause, to take colour from the singer's personal feelings. I received a new lesson myself only a day or two since, respecting the character of that early Greek verse, from a book I was re-reading after twelve years keeping it by me to re-read,—Emile Boutmy's *Philosophie de l'Architecture en Grèce*,[1]—in which (p. 121) is this notable sentence. "L'un des traits les plus frappants de la phrase homérique, c'est que *l'omission* et le *sous-entendu* y sont sans exemple. Je ne crois pas qu'on puisse signaler dans l'Iliade ou dans l'Odyssée une ellipse, ou une enthyméme." But the difference between explicit and undisturbed narrative or statement of emotion, in this kind, and the continual hinting, suggesting, mystifying, and magnifying, of recent pathetic poetry (and I believe also of Gothic as opposed to Greek or pure Latin poetry), requires more thought, and above all, more illustration, than I have time at present to give; and I am content to leave the verses preserved in this book to please whom they may please, without insisting upon any reasons why they should; and for myself, satisfied in my often reiterated law of right work, that it is the expression of true pleasure in right things[2]—and thankful that, much though I love my Byron, the lives of Saints may be made vivid enough to me by less vigorous verses than are necessary to adorn the biography of Corsairs and Giaours.

[1] [For a notice of this book, see *Aratra Pentelici*, § 166 (Vol. XX. p. 317 and *n.*).]

[2] [See, for instance, *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 263, and the other passages there noted); also *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 3 (Vol. XIX. p. 53).]

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THESE songs and hymns of the poor people have been collected, little by little, in the course of a great many years which I have passed in constant intercourse with the Tuscan contadini. They are but the *siflings*, so to say, of hundreds and hundreds which I have heard and learnt, mostly from old people: many of them have never, so far as I know, been written down before, and others it would be impossible now to find. A great many were taught me by the celebrated improvisatrice, Beatrice Bernardi of Pian degli Ontani,[1] whose portrait I have placed in the beginning of the book,—one of the most wonderful women whom I ever knew. This Beatrice[2] was the daughter of a stonemason at Melo, a little village of not very easy access on the mountain side above Cutigliano; and her mother having died in Beatrice's infancy, she became, from early childhood, the companion and assistant of her father, accompanying him to his winter labours in the Maremma, and, as she grew larger, helping him at his work by bringing him stones for the walls and bridges which he built, carrying them balanced on her head. *She had no education in the common sense of the word, never learning even the alphabet,** but she had a wonderful memory, and could sing or recite long pieces of poetry. As a girl, she used in summer to follow the sheep, with her distaff at her waist; and would fill up her hours of solitude by singing such ballads as "The war of St. Michael and the dragon! The creation of the world!! and the Fall of man!!!" or "The history of San Pellegrino, son of Romano, King of Scotland"; and now, in her old age, she knows nearly all the New Testament history, and much of the Old, in poetical form. She was very beautiful then, they say, with curling hair, and wonderful inspired-looking eyes, and there must always have been a great charm in her voice and smile; so it is no great wonder that Matteo Bernardi, much older than herself, and owner of a fine farm at Pian degli Ontani, and of many cattle, chose rather to marry the shepherd girl who could sing so sweetly, than another woman whom his family liked better, and who might perhaps have brought him more share of worldly prosperity. On

* Italics mine. Compare *Fors* on education, No. 94.[3] [J. R.]

[1] [Hence the title given by Ruskin to her portrait, "Beatrice of the Field of the Alder-trees" (Ontani). For some further particulars about her, see the Introduction, above, p. xxvi.]

[2] [The passage, "Beatrice was the daughter . . ." down to ". . . the same name as herself," was read by Ruskin in the third of his lectures on the *Art of England*, § 84, and in § 85 he comments upon some points in the biography (Vol. XXXIII.). In line 14 here, for "grew larger," the *Art of England* has "grew stronger." Miss Alexander's word is "larger."]

[3] [See Vol. XXIX. pp. 479 *seq.*]

Beatrice's wedding day, according to the old custom of the country, one or two poets improvised verses suitable to the occasion, and as she listened to them, suddenly she felt in herself a new power, and began to sing the poetry which was then born in her mind, and having once begun, found it impossible to stop, and kept on singing a great while; so that all were astonished, and her uncle, who was present, said, "Beatrice, you have deceived me! If I had known what you were, I would have put you in a convent." From that time forth she was the great poetess of all that part of the country, and was sent for to sing and recite at weddings and other festivals for many miles around; and perhaps she might have been happy; but her husband's sister, Barbara, who lived in the house, and who had not approved of the marriage, tried very wickedly to set her brother against his wife, and to some extent succeeded.[1] He tried to stop her singing, which seemed to him a sort of madness, and at times he treated her with great unkindness: but sing she must, and sing she did, for it was what the Lord made her for: and she lived down all their dislike; her husband loved her in his old age; and Barbara, whom she nursed with motherly kindness through a long and distressing illness, was her friend before she died. Beatrice is still living, at a great age now, but still retaining much of her old beauty and brilliancy, and is waited on and cared for with much affection by a pretty grand-daughter bearing the same name as herself.

As for the other songs, I have explained in the notes which I have written under them[2] all the little that I know about them. The tunes, with the exception of those which I found printed in the "Corona di Sacre Canzoni,"[3] I learned from the poor people themselves, and wrote down as well as I could. Most of them (though they sound very sweet to me, bringing back the very feeling of the air in the fir-woods, or on the farms, where I have been used to hear them) are nothing more than plaintive monotonous little chants; but a few of the airs are very pretty; the accompaniments have been nearly all composed by Signora Sestilia Poggiali. The pictures sufficiently explain themselves; they are likenesses, nearly all, of the country people in their everyday clothes and with their everyday surroundings; while as to the ornamenting of the pages, it seemed natural that roadside songs should have borders of roadside flowers. Of the four long ballads, the "Madonna and the Gipsy," "St. Christopher," "Sta. Zita," and "The Samaritan," I have put in only one, the Samaritan, at full length, and of St. Christopher I have left out all the last half,[4] which describes his preaching and his martyrdom, both because it was so very long, and because the details were so painful. Already the old songs are fast being forgotten; many of them it would be impossible now to find, and others are sung only by a few aged people

[1] [For a later mention of Barbara, see below, p. 211.]

[2] [That is, in notes written at the bottom of the pages in Miss Alexander's original MS. book. These notes have in the present edition been added to such songs as Ruskin included in his *Roadside Songs*.]

[3] [For further particulars of this book, see p. 197 *n*.]

[4] [Ruskin, as will be seen (pp. 191, 206), did not print the ballad of St. Christopher, substituting a prose account of the legend, written for him by Miss Alexander.]

who will soon be gone, or in some remote corners of the mountains; and in a few years they will probably be heard no more. They have served their time, and many people laugh at them now, and some have told me that I should have done better to spend my time and work on something more valuable; but in their day they have been a comfort to many. Labouring people have sung them at their work, and have felt their burdens lightened; they have brightened the long winter evenings of the poor women in lonely houses high among the mountains, when they have been sitting over their fires of fir-branches, with their children about them, shut in by the snows outside, and with their men all away in the Maremma: and I have known those who have been helped to bear sickness and trouble, and even to meet death itself, with more courage, by verses of the simple old hymns. I have heard Beato Leonardo's "Hymn to the Cross"[1] sung in chorus by a party of pilgrims, men and women together, going to the mountain of San Pellegrino on a still moonlight night in August, when it has sounded to me as sweet as anything that ever I heard. It seems to me that there are others who will collect and preserve the thoughts of the rich and great; but I have wished to make my book all of poor people's poetry, and who knows but it may contain a word of help or consolation for some poor soul yet? However that may be, I have done my best to save a little of what is passing away.

FRANCESCA ALEXANDER.

Florence, Piazza Santa Maria Novella,
December 25th, 1882.

[1] [Not included in Ruskin's selection. It is now printed at the end of *Roadside Songs* (below, pp. 244, 245).]

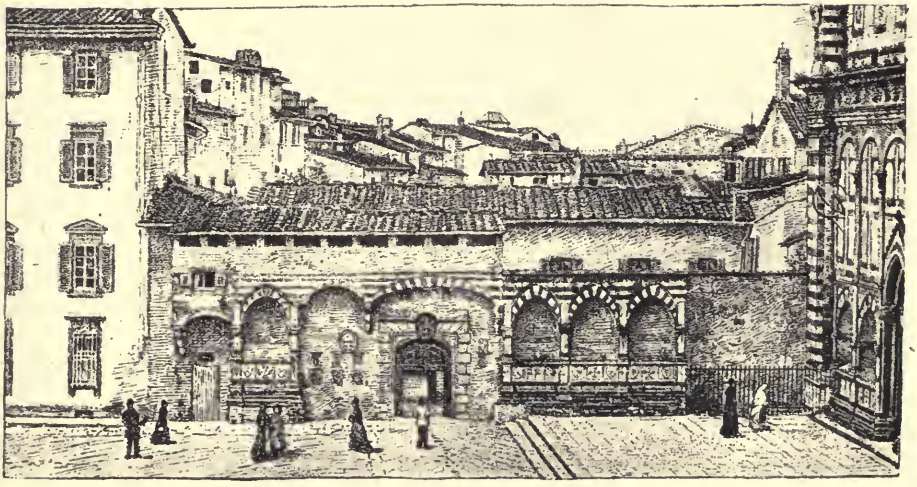
Preface

the house, and who had not approved of the marriage, tried very unkindly to set her brother against his wife. and to some extent succeeded. He tried to stop her singing, which seemed to him a sort of madness, and at times he treated her with quite unkindness, but sing she must and sing she did, for it was what the Lord made her for; and she lived down all their dislike: her husband loved her in his old age; and Barbara whom she nursed with motherly kindness through a long and most distressing illness, won her friend before she died. Beatrice is still living at a great age now, but still retaining much of her old beauty and brilliancy. and is visited on and cared for with much affection by a pretty grand daughter bearing the same name as herself. As for the other songs, I have explained in the notes which I have written under them all the little that I know about them. The tunes, with the exception of those which I found printed in the Canone di Sacre Canzoni, I learned from the poor people themselves, and wrote down as well as I could: most of them, though they sound very sweet to me, bringing back the very feeling of the air in the fir woods, or on the farms, where I have been used to hear them) are nothing more than plaintive monotonous little chants but a few of the airs are very pretty; the accompaniments have been nearly all composed by Sig.r Sestilio Pozzoli. And the pictures sufficiently explain themselves; they are likenesses, nearly all, of the country people in their every day clothes and with their every day surroundings; while as to the ornamenting of the pages. it seemed natural that road-side songs should have borders of road-side flowers. Of the four long Ballads, the Madonna and the Gypsy, St. Christopher, St. Zita, and the Samaritan, I have put in only one (the Samaritan) at full length, and of St. Christopher I have left out all the last half, which describes his preaching and his martyrdom, both because it was so very long, and because the details were so painful. Already the old songs are fast being forgotten; many of them it would be impossible now to find, and others are sung only by a few aged people who will soon be gone. or in some remote corners of the mountains; and in a few years they will probably be heard no more. They have served their time, and many people laugh at them now, and some have told me that I should have done better to spend my time and work on something more valuable: but in their day they have been a comfort to many. Labouring people have sung them at their work, and have felt their burdens lightened; they have lightened the long Winter evenings of the poor Women in lonely houses high among the mountains, when they have been sitting over their fires of fir-branches, with their children at out them, shut in by the snow outside, and with their men all away in the Maremma; and I have known those who have been helped to bear sickness and trouble, and even to meet death itself with more courage, by verses of the simple old hymns. I have heard Beato Leonardo's hymn to the cross sung in chorus by a party of pilgrims, men and women together, going to the mountain of San Pellegrino on a still moonlight night in August, when it has sounded to me as sweet as anything that ever I heard. It seems to me that there are others who will collect and preserve the thoughts of the rich and great; and I have wished to make my book all of poor people's poetry. and who knows but it may contain a word of help or consolation for some poor soul yet? If ever that may be, I have done my best to save a little of what is passing away.

Florence, Piazza Santa Maria Novella.

December 25th 1882

Francesca Alexander



ROADSIDE SONGS OF TUSCANY

INTRODUCTORY

THE STORY OF LUCIA

In reading the legends of the saints, the reader who cares for the truth that remains in them must always observe first, whether the saint is only a symbolic one, like St. Sophia and St. Catherine; or a real one, like St. Geneviève and St. Benedict.[1] In the second place, if they are real people, he must observe whether the miracles are done *by* them, or *for* them. Legends of consciously active miracles are rare: the modesty of the great saints prevents them from attempting such, and all the loveliest and best witnessed stories are of miracles done for them or through their ministry, often without their knowledge,—like the shining of Moses' face,[2] or the robing of St. Martin by the angels (*Bible of Amiens*, chap. i.).[3]

Now Santa Zita, "St. Maid," was a real, living, hard-worked maid-servant, in the town you still know as a great oil-mart, in the thirteenth century. As real a person as your own kitchen-maid, and not a bit better, probably, than yours is, if she's a good one;—only, living in the most vital and powerful days of Christianity, she was made to feel and know many things which your kitchen-maid can never feel, nor even hear of; and therefore, having also extremely fine intellect as well as heart, she became a very notable creature indeed, and one of wide practical

[1] [Compare what Ruskin says of the saints painted by Carpaccio: *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 71 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 733-4); and *Pleasures of England*, § 94 (Vol. XXXIII.).]

[2] [See Exodus xxxiv. 29, 30.]

[3] [§ 26; Vol. XXXIII.]

power throughout Europe; for though she lived and died a servant of all work at a clothier's,—thirty years after her death, Dante acknowledges her the patron saint of her city:[1] and she has ever since been the type of perfectness in servant life, to the Christian world.

More of her—indeed, all that is truly known of her—you shall hear in the next number of this book:[2] I have here only to observe to you, that this, her principal active miracle during life, done at the well, is done unconsciously, and by her customary and natural prayer,—answered only, this time, in an unexpected manner.

Of such prayer, and its possible answer, we will think further[3] after reading all her legendary history: but in the meantime, you must hear the quite plain and indisputable story of the girl who is drawn to represent her in Francesca's picture: which Francesca herself tells us, as follows:—

We come now[4] to Sta. Zita, of whom the original is Lucia Santi, a young married woman of "Le Motte," a place so named on account of the frequent landslides which take place in the neighbourhood. I always wonder why any one ever built the house in which she lives, which is in the very bed of a rocky stream, at the bottom of a ravine so narrow that one often does not see the house at all until he finds himself on the edge of the precipice, looking down on the roof of grey slate which covers the whole irregular group of buildings, on the threshing-floor, the haystacks, and, what there is hardly any need to mention, the cherry trees. It was not built there for want of any other place, for the Santi family are rich contadini, and own quite a large extent of beautiful hilly country. Lucia, as her picture shows,[5] is more very sweet-looking than very pretty. Though she *is* pretty, too, with her bright black eyes, always ready to brighten into a smile, and her dimples, and her shining white teeth, which look all the whiter contrasted with her brown skin. She lives on the Modenese side of the confine (for I ought to have said before that l'Abetone is just on the border where the two states join), so the people on the Tuscan side call her "Lombarda," and regard her with no very friendly eyes. It is strange what a mortal dislike there is between the Tuscans on the confine, and their Modenese, or, as they call them, *Lombard* neighbours. People living not a mile apart speak of each other

[1] [*Inferno*, xxi. 38, where the poet speaks of a magistrate of Lucca as "one of Santa Zita's elders": see below, p. 67.]

[2] [See now below, pp. 67 *seq.*]

[3] [See below, p. 79.]

[4] [That is, in Miss Alexander's original MS. book of stories: see the note on p. 48.]

[5] [See Plates IV.–VII.]

as foreigners, and the stories that each nationality tells about the other are enough to frighten one. I remember at one time there was a priest at the Abetone church who came from Fiumalbo, five miles off, and he seemed to be a very good man; but when I tried to induce an Abetone girl to go to his church, and hear him explain the gospel, as he was in the habit of doing on Sunday morning, she replied, in a tone of mingled contempt and bitterness, that she could not see the use of going to church to hear *"that Lombard!"*

But the mountain people have a great faculty of glorifying their own particular little corners, however small, and despising the rest of the world—what the Italians call the *patriotism of the campanile.* I remember once when Pellegrino Seghi, the singer, brought us a present of a fine trout which he had caught in the Lima, he gave it to me with the remark that we should find it *quite different* from the trout of the Sestaione. Though what the difference consisted in, or why there should be any rivalry between the inhabitants of two beautiful valleys four miles apart, I could never understand.

But to return to Lucia; she is married to the second son of old Santi, the rich contadino; and she and her husband, and the other son and his wife, and the two children, live with the old people. The father, of course, is absolute master, and I am afraid sometimes he is rather a hard master to poor Lucia. She is a gentle, willing creature, but not very large or strong, and they literally "load and drive her" in a way that I should think cruel towards any beast of burden. It is enough to try any one's patience to see that poor Lucia walking down the steep road to the mill, two miles away, bent almost double under the weight of an immense sack of grain, stopping now and then to sit down and rest on a stone by the roadside, and when she has recovered her breath, creeping laboriously on again; and I do think sometimes that her father-in-law might let her take the mule; but he never thinks of it, and really, I do not think she ever thinks of it either. Long before daylight she must be about the farm work; sometimes as early as three o'clock, when there is mowing or reaping to be done. For all this she receives a poor living, and nothing else; she is simply an unpaid, overworked farm servant. She dresses in the coarse cloth which she and the other two women spin and weave from the wool of their own sheep. I must say that they have a wonderful taste in the making up and trimming of pretty fanciful aprons, which they weave with bright stripes of all sorts of colours, and make curious little pockets in. And the linen is bought of other contadini, who raise and spin flax, and exchange it for the wool of Le Motte. So Lucia is clothed without spending money. Her head-dress, the only thing wanting, is supplied in a curious way. Once every two years a man travels through those mountains, buying up the hair of the women and girls. Lucia has beautiful coal-black hair, as fine as silk, and she sells it to him for a cotton handkerchief, worth (possibly) a franc! He probably sells that hair for thirty or forty francs. I told her that I thought she made a bad bargain, and she answered with her usual bright smile, "I can go to church without my hair, but I cannot go without my handkerchief." She is exceedingly fond of hearing songs or stories, and took a particular fancy to the ballad of the Samaritan woman, which I used to sing to

her. The story of how our Lord met that woman when she went to the well for water took a great hold of her imagination, because she was in the habit of going to the well every day herself. About that time a pedlar came along who sold little books and coarse lithographs of sacred subjects, and we bought a good many and gave them to the neighbours. Lucia could not read, so the books were of no use to her, but we gave her her choice of the lithographs, and she chose a head of our Lord. When it was in her hands, she kissed it many times over with great devotion, and then said to me, her eyes shining very brightly, as they always did when any very bright thought came into her mind,—

"I wish He would meet me some day; I know what I would say to Him!"

"What would you say to Him?" I asked her; and she, much excited, and apparently thinking such a meeting by no means improbable, answered,—

"I would ask Him to take me with Him."

"But," I said, "would you not be sorry to leave the baby?"

"Perhaps," she answered, "He would let me take the baby too."

I asked her then if she would not be sorry to leave her husband: and she grew more sober, and thought about it for a minute: then she said,—

"I *should* be a little sorry to leave him, but he is a young man, and would soon find another wife. If he were an old man, then it would be different, and I would not leave him. But I should so like to go away with the Lord Jesus!"

"And is this all of the first story?"

This is all; and I am no less sorry than you there is no more:—yet, here, short and uneventful as it is, you have the record of a whole life, and of its love, such love as was allowed to it. Is the reader shocked at Lucia's readiness to leave her husband, if only he did not miss her too much, for another Love? Have we here the proved mischief of religious enthusiasm, thinks he, making us despise our earthly duties?

Not so; look on it with what Protestant and practical mind you may. Lucia's "desire to depart and be with Christ"[1] is in no wise enthusiastic,—nay, in this vivid phase it is only momentary, and a new idea to her,—the consequence of Francesca's singing the Ballad of the Samaritana, and of the happy possession of the gay lithograph. It had

[1] [Philemon i. 23.]

not been in the least a part of her life, before,—no manner of discontent nor desire had defiled that life—or exalted. Her mind, so far as I can read it, is, in its nobleness of submission, like that of a graceful and loyal animal of burden. I have just been teaching the children at our village school, Bloomfield's verses about his "Bayard":—

> "Ready, as birds to meet the morn,
> Were all his efforts at the plough;
> Then, the millbrook, with hay or corn,
> Good creature, how he'd spatter through!
>
> I left him in the shafts behind,
> His fellows all unhooked and gone;
> He neighed, and deemed the thing unkind,
> Then, starting, drew the load alone."[1]

And compare my own notes on the Serf horse of the railway station.* Like minded, in many respects, is poor Lucia,—and, in such likeness, far more to be reverenced than pitied.

Neither, in the slight hold which her heart takes of her domestic state, is she to be thought of with blame. Do not think, refined lady-love of happy husband, that she is incapable of happiness like yours; neither think *you*, passionate lady-love of poet lover, that she is incapable of your yearning, or distress. But—first of all things—she has been taught alike to forget herself, and subdue herself; she is a part of the, often cruel, always mysterious, order of the Universe; resigned to it without a murmur—without a reproach—without a prayer—except that her strength may be as her day:[2] an absolutely dutiful, absolutely innocent, unflinchingly brave and useful creature;—while you, most of you, my lady friends, are flirting and pouting and mewing—

* I forget where; but will give reference in next number, having a word or two more to say about it, here irrelevant.[3]

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[1] [Quoted also in *Love's Meinie*, § 138 (Vol. XXV. p. 131).]

[2] [See Deuteronomy xxxiii. 25.]

[3] [Ruskin did not, however, revert to the matter in the next number; the reference is to *Time and Tide*, § 20 (Vol. XVII. p. 335).]

as if the entire world had been made for you, and, by you, only to be pouted at, played with, or despised. I heard of a rich and well-educated girl, but the other day, sick, no one of her people guessed why,—nor she neither, poor girl; but she was falling into a dangerous and fixed melancholy, simply for want of something to do. To have embroidered a handkerchief for Lucia, and sent it her, for once, without cutting her hair off in exchange, would have been singularly medicinal to the invalid.

For the rest,—Lucia is really a great deal prettier than she looks at the well-side; for Francesca had to bring her down to Santa Zita's level in that particular, and there is no record that Santa Zita was the least pretty, or had any distinction whatever above other girls, except her perfect usefulness and peace of heart.

THE BALLAD OF SANTA ZITA

NOTES ON THE LIFE OF SANTA ZITA

NOTHING is more amazing to me, among the simplicities of well-meaning mankind, than the way in which Catholic writers accumulate, and Catholic prelates permit the accumulation of, any quantity of feebly sentimental and idly decorative nonsense round the realities of sacred lives, until the whole story becomes incredible to men of common sense, and the good of it, to practical persons, totally lost. Here is a quite unquestionable fact in the thirteenth century, for example, of extreme and lovely significance,—that a poor servant girl, living in the midst of an intensely active and warlike city, becomes so known there, and so beloved, for her mere and pure goodness, that in thirty years after her death the greatest poet of Italy sufficiently distinguishes a burgher of Lucca from one of any other city by calling him "one of Santa Zita's Elders."[1] A few external facts about her childhood are remembered, with the reports of two or three inconspicuous miracles, not so much done by her, as happening to her: and these, with all that is really known of her character, are related, as they have been vitally believed among her people from that day to this, in the following country song, which would have been lost to us, but for Francesca's pity for it. But when I look at the authorized versions and editions of the story by Catholic historians, I find, first, that in the *Dictionnaire des Sciences Ecclésiastiques*[2] her name does not occur at all; secondly, that Alban Butler takes no notice whatever of the miracles

[1] [See above, p. 62.]

[2] [*Bibliothèque sacrée; ou, Dictionnaire universel historique, dogmatique, canonique, géographique et chronologique des Sciences Ecclésiastiques, par les P.P. Richard et Giraud, dominicains.* Paris, 1760, 6 vols.; 1822–1827, 29 vols.]

happening to her while she was alive, which have all a special meaning; but only of the "juridically established"[1] ones at her grave, which have no meaning whatever, even had they been related (which they are not); thirdly, that earlier writers on the subject merely copy from each other, with studious variations of phrase to conceal the copying, and contain, all put together, vitally nothing more than the popular tradition; and lastly, that though in all the versions, as well as in the ballad, the *name* of her native village is carefully preserved to us,[2] the whereabouts of it is told by nobody. And as the imps of darkness would have it, when I was in Italy last year, with leisure enough on my hands to look for the place, I spent my afternoons in geological pursuit of the beddings of Lucca marble, and never thought of questioning in which glen of it Santa Zita was born.

For that matter, all glens among those marble mountains are nearly alike: vine and olive below, chestnut higher up, pasture and cornfield between woods of stone-pine on the crests: and there is no more beautiful scene, nor, to my thinking, any other scene in the world pregnant with historical interest so singular, as that from the meadowy ridge of the Monte Pisano, with Pisa at your feet on one side,—her Baptistery and Campo Santo minutely clear, like the little carved models she sells of them,—and Lucca, like a mural crown fallen among the fields of the Val di Serchio on the other: and all the Riviera di Levante, as far as Chiavari, purple between the burning bays of the Gulph of Genoa.

Whether Zita's native farm was in vale or plain of this country,* matters little, for the mountain influence on character is alike over both. I repeat from the eighteenth

* Francesca has found it out for me, from a good priest in Lucca. It was a village among the hills nine miles north of the city.

[1] [*Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs, and other Principal Saints*, 1833, vol. i. p. 527 (April 27): "One hundred and fifty miracles wrought in the behalf of such as had recourse to her intercession have been juridically proved."]

[2] [See Stanza iii. of the Ballad (p. 80): "Monsagrato."]

letter of *Fors*, written in April of 1872,[1] two casual references to this scenery and to its people, which will be of use to us now:—

"There are poppies, and bright ones too, about the banks and roadsides; but the corn of Val di Serchio * is too proud to grow with poppies, and is set with wild gladiolus instead, deep violet colour. Here and there a mound of crag rises out of the fields, crested with stone-pine, and studded all over with the large stars of the white rock-cistus. Quiet streams, filled with close crowds of the golden waterflag, wind beside meadows painted with purple orchis. On each side of the great plain is a wilderness of hills, veiled at their feet with a grey cloud of olive woods; above, sweet with glades of chestnut:—peaks of more distant blue, still, to-day, embroidered with snow, are rather to be thought of as vast precious stones than mountains, for all the state of the world's palaces has been hewn out of their marble.

"Nor is the peasant race of Val di Serchio unblest, if honesty, kindness, food sufficient for them, and peace of heart, can anywise make up for poverty in current coin. Only the evening before last, I was up among the hills to the south of Lucca, close to the remains of the country-house of Castruccio Castracani, who was Lord of the Val di Niévole, and much good land besides, in the year 1328; (and whose sword, you perhaps remember, was presented to the King of Sardinia, on his visit to the Lucchesi after driving out the old Duke of Tuscany, which he had no more business to do than to drive out the Duke of Devonshire; † and Mrs. Browning, in her simplicity thinking it all quite proper, wrote a beautiful poem upon the presentation). Well, I was up among the hills, that way, in places where no English ever dream of going, being altogether lovely and at rest, and the country life in them unchanged; and I had several friends with me, and among them, one of the young girls who were at Furness Abbey last year: and scrambling about among the vines, she lost a pretty little cross of Florentine work. Luckily, she had made acquaintance, only the day before, with the peasant mistress of a cottage close by, and with her two younger children, Adam and Eve. Eve was still tied up tight in swaddling clothes, down to the toes, and carried about as a bundle; but Adam was old enough to run about, and found the cross; and his mother gave it us back next day.

"Not unblest, such a people, though with some common human care and kindness you might bless them a little more. If only you would not curse them; but the curse of your modern life is fatally near, and only for a few years more, perhaps, they will be seen—driving their tawny kine, or with their sheep following them,—to pass, like pictures in enchanted motion, among their glades of vine."

* In *Fors*, always Val di Niévole, including the higher vale of Pistoja.

† I retouch *Fors* a little here, to make it intelligible without the context.

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[1] [See Vol. XXVII. pp. 306–309.]

It would be difficult to conceive an ideal of human life more perfect than we thus saw with our eyes, and knew with our hearts, in the dingle of Monte Pisano. On the steep brow of the hill above, reached by a winding path, rose a beautiful Franciscan monastery (the building is still there —the monks have since been driven away); far above receded the waving summits of the pine-clad hills; beneath, the grand spaces between the rocks were all shaded either with chestnut or vine; the rocks green with arbutus,—gleams of the towers of Lucca seen here and there down the glen; and possessing these lovely places, a people of pure Etruscan descent, quietly laborious and honest; and keeping the happiness of their earliest Christian faith unchanged, even down to little Adam and Eve at play, before our mortal eyes, in their Lord's vineyard.

Beautiful as it all is, and thankful though we should be for the possible sight of it, nothing that now exists can give us any conception of the elements of Catholic rural life in Zita's time, for this terrible reason—that throughout Italy the towns which were then the citadel-tutors of her faith, and its visible glory, are now its angriest destroyers, and ignoblest disgrace. What Lucca was when her sacred handmaid came down to serve in her streets, we will see presently; but first, I want to think with the reader what a "Saint," whether of town or country, really is, and how such sort of men and women can be found, or made, if we want them.

Questions long since on my mind (see *Ethics of the Dust*, Lecture VIII.[1])—curiously, I think, *not* on the mind of the ecclesiastical student in general; but to the best of our powers needing to be answered, before we can hope to get any conception of mediæval life in its truth or beauty.

In the first place, we need not at all trouble ourselves about canonization. Very certainly, many real saints have lived and died unknown,—and as certainly, no ecclesiastical

[1] [See Vol. XVIII. p. 317.]

authority could ever make the title other than honorary, for St. Cyril, St. Dunstan, or St. Dominic.

In the second place, we are for the present to avoid all reference to the meaning of the word "sanctification"[1] as applied to Christians, or even to baptized persons, without exception, and of the word "consecration," as applied to persons appointed to sacred offices. What this last word means, shall be considered afterwards with relation to the powers of Kings and Priests;[2] but here we have nothing to do with this branch of the enquiry. When a converted Dane or Saxon is baptized with his army, you do not immediately produce an army of Danish or Saxon saints; neither is it supposed that every vicar becomes a saint on obtaining a bishopric, or every heir-apparent on coming to the throne.

In the next place, it seems to me that our habit of using the word only of the holy persons who have believed in Christ, and not of the holy men of old to whom God spoke as a man speaketh to his friend,[3] is an extremely false and confusing one.

We might surely say St. Abel, Enoch, Noah, or Daniel, —as truly as St. George, or Francis.

Then again—though this is a matter rather of carelessness than custom, it has caused no small confusion that we sometimes call angels "saints." To say St. Michael, or St. Gabriel, for Michael and Gabriel, makes us unconsciously lose sight of the great distinction between the holiness ascribed to God Himself, and inherent in His unfallen creatures, from that which we conceive as separating one sinful creature from another.

Then farther,—and this is the most practical matter for our present business,—we must carefully separate the mythic saints from the real ones.[4] Often some vestige of real life

[1] [On which term, compare Vol. IV. p. 5.]
[2] [See below, p. 119.]
[3] [Exodus xxxiii. 11.]
[4] [Compare above, p. 61.]

is the root of a mythic sanctity; there was assuredly a Cecilia, probably a Barbara, and a Catherine,—in remote possibility an Ursula,—but as saints, they are to the Christian Church merely the spiritual symbols of sacred Music, Architecture, Royalty, and Youth. Extremely useful and lovely in that figurative capacity, but with care to be recognized as imaginative, and not to be allowed with their cloudy outlines to disguise, or with their impossible virtue to deaden, the tangible reality, and actively stimulating examples, of the working saints.

Lastly,—and this bears especially on the life of Santa Zita,—it is of extreme importance to distinguish a Saint from an Innocent. Though certain states of malady are capable of spiritual impressions never granted to ordinary health, and although persons of infirm body or feeble intellect are often lovely in character, or may appear to be under some special heavenly guard, the word "Saint" can never be applied to such, for there is distinct implication of demoniac power as having more or less dominion over all disease, in the Levitical forbidding of maimed victims for sacrifice.[1]

And in all rational and authoritative sense the word "Saint" can only be applied to persons in pure health of body, heart, and brain; and throughout the records of Christian life remaining to us, it is a primal, precious, and indisputable truth that the great saints, without exception, have been among and above all other known men and women, distinctively strong, kind, witty, and wise.

Getting clearly set then, these broad border walls of sainthood, let us think next what manner of betterness it may be, which actually, and often visibly, as in this instance of St. Zita, separates one Christian person from the rest, so as to make them eminently venerable to the rest, and eminently helpful and exemplary to them.

Note first, respecting this, that even supposing the natural good qualities of heart and mind given in equal

[1] [Leviticus xxi. 16, xxii. 22. Compare Vol. VII. p. 417 *n.*]

measure,—so that, of possible saints born, one could not say that this babe, or the other, was good beyond all the rest,—still, the circumstances of life so thwart and limit some, and so irregularly aid others, that at last it is with human lives as with rock crystals,—thousands dim or broken for one quite pure and quite pointed.

But,—and this is the chief matter to be considered,—the ordinary needs and labours of life, the ordinary laws of its continuance, require many states of temper and phases of character, inconsistent with the perfectest types of Christianity. Pointed crystals cannot be made sea-beaches of,—or they must lose their points. Pride, the desire of bodily pleasure, anger, ambition, at least so far as the word implies a natural pleasure in governing, pugnacity, obstinacy, and the selfish family and personal affections, have all their necessary offices,—for the most part, wide and constant,—in the economy of the world. The saintly virtues, humility, resignation, patience (in the sense of feeling no anger)—obedience, meaning the *love* of obeying rather than of commanding, fortitude against all temptation of bodily pleasure, and the full-flowing charity which forbids a selfish love,—are all conditions of mind possible to few, and manifestly meant to furnish forth those who are to be seen as fixed lights in the world;—and by no means to be the native inheritance of all its fire-flies. Wherever these virtues truly and naturally exist, the persons endowed with them become, without any doubt or difficulty, eminent in blessing to, and in rule over, the people round them; and are thankfully beloved and remembered as Princes of God, for evermore. Cuthbert of Melrose, Martin of Tours, Benedict of Monte Cassino, Hugo of Lincoln, Geneviève of Paris, Hilda of Whitby, Clara of Assisi, Joan of Orleans,[1] have been, beyond

[1] [For other references to Cuthbert, see *Pleasures of England*, §§ 48, 66, 68 (Vol. XXXIII.); Martin, *Bible of Amiens*, ch. i. (*ibid.*); Benedict, *Valle Crucis* (*ibid.*); Hugo, *Ariadne Florentina*, § 164 (Vol. XXII. p. 409), and *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 43 and 88 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 118, Vol. XXIX. p. 387); Geneviève, *Bible of Amiens*, ch. i. § 3); Hilda, *ibid.*, ch. ii. § 48; and Joan of Arc, General Index.]

any denial, and without one diminishing or disgracing fault or flaw, powers for good to all the healthy races, and in all the goodly spirits, of the Christendom which honours them; and the candour of final history will show that their unknown, or known but to be slandered, servants and disciples have been the ministers of vital energy in every beautiful art and holy state of its national life.

And the most imperatively practical corollary which must follow from our rightly understanding these things, is that, seeing the first of the saintly virtues is Humility, nobody must set themselves up to be a saint. The lives good for most people, and intended for them, are the lives of sheep and robins: and they may be every evening and morning thankful that they have fields to lie down in, and banks to build nests in, and are not called by Heaven to the sorrow of its thrones.

Not but that in the duties of domestic life, rightly done, and in its contingent trials, rightly borne, there may be call enough for all the virtue that is in the best of us;—but there is always so much of inferiority in the lot, that it was not chosen in expectation of trial, but of pleasure; and the sufferings it may bring are not for righteousness' sake, but for our affection's sake. And whatever extravagance or unreasonableness may be evident or demonstrable in the practices of ascetic life, the reader will find, if he tries any of them, that there are many things easily laughed at which are not easily done; and that, whatever may be our Protestant estimate of the dignity or use of sainthood, this at least is certain, that it is an extremely hard thing to be a saint.

Few writers have believed, and assuredly none have said, more good of general human nature than I;[1] and few men have been so fortunate in the number of good and dear people whom they have known, both in their own family, and among strangers. I am quite ready to aver

[1] [A collection of passages in this sense has been made in one of the *Ruskin Treasuries*, entitled *The Dignity of Man* (1906): see General Index, under "Human Nature."]

the unconscious Sainthood of my Celtic,—the involuntary Sainthood of my Saxon,—aunt;[1] and my mother would certainly have been a Saint,—but for my father and me. I have friends whose cheerfulness it would grieve me to exchange for more devotional behaviour; and others, whose faults I should miss, if they were wholly washed away. But so it is, that the white robes of daily humanity are always in some way or other a little the worse for the wear; and to keep them wholly unspotted from the world,[2] and hold the cross in the right hand and palm in the left, steadily through all the rough walking of it, is granted to very, very few creatures that live by breath and bread.

And yet, fully recognizing all this, I cannot but be always surprised at the great fuss that Lucca made over her little Zita. The city was, every soul of it, in a splendid state of pious and heroic excitement, at the time when Zita was brushing her master's cloak, and washing up his crockery. Lucca had built, in the limitless religious fervour of the previous century, some thirty splendid churches in the square quarter of an English mile which her walls defended: the Kings of Europe vowed by her Volto Santo:[3] the cross was inlaid over all her gates,[4] the shields of her knights sustained by sculptured angels. The pride of Pisa herself did but follow with more finished stateliness the traces of her steps in sacred architecture, and in the very moment when the small mountain girl came down to take her "situation," Niccola Pisano was carving Christ's Nativity, within a dozen miles of her master's door. Enough, certainly, to put the child extremely on her good behaviour,—but the very last state of things, one should have thought, in which the least notice would have been taken by anybody how she behaved!

[1] [For Ruskin's "Celtic" aunt (his father's sister, Jessie), see *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 63 and 65 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 546, 602); and for the "Saxon" one (his mother's sister, Bridget), *Fors*, Letter 46 (*ibid.*, p. 171). Portraits of "my two aunts" are engraved in a Plate in *Præterita*.]

[2] [James i. 27.]

[3] [See *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 18 (Vol. XXVII. p. 312 and *n.*).]

[4] [See *Val d'Arno*, § 164 and Fig. 2 (Vol. XXIII. p. 100).]

One might indeed understand her gradually gaining notice for the consistency of her life, and in her contentment with it. Certainly the monastic bodies must have endeavoured to make her an almoner or a prioress;—certainly the knights' ladies must have wanted her for their maid or housekeeper; and she, staying with her master, and remaining proof against every form of pride, and against the hope in which it so often subtly veils itself, of a wider sphere of duty or usefulness, might in the end attract wonder enough; besides the ever farther-circling love of the poor, grateful to her not merely for her alms, but also, and much more, for her fellowship. But then the next thing that puzzles me is,—why nobody began to do likewise? Why, in a city wholly zealous for its religion, there were not found other servant-girls who would live as savingly, and give alms;—or great ladies who could see that such sort of work for Christ had more zest in it than shutting themselves into cells, numbering their prayers by dried pease, or giving gorgeous gifts of that which had cost them nothing. And, much more, why, not only then, and there, but also before, and since, and everywhere, were no more, and are no more, Zitas than one,—or granting, what I believe to be the truth, that in real nature of goodness and act there are and have been many such, why do we all take no notice of them,—and get no good of them, but—only our fires lighted, and carpets swept?

The reason why there are no more is partly indeed simple enough, that the sharp severity and hardship of such a life are quite intolerable by any but the strongest wills and constitutions; and the people who possess both have rarely a mind so to prove them. There is no debate about this:—the great saints and the little,—(those except only who have been suddenly called from conversion to martyrdom, and have had no time to live, whether softly or hardly), are of one accord as to the necessity, to pure spiritual state, not merely of temperate and simple habits, but of steady denial to the body of all but its absolute

needs, and steady infliction upon it of as much pain as it can without injury bear. The exaggeration of penance into palsy is of course insane; and the great saints, being all of them, as I said,[1] pre-eminently witty and wise, never exaggerate anything; so that the practised hardship becomes, with them, unconscious, and hard no more, while it gives them, in mind and body, the ease of an athlete. But to most people, their resolution is as impossible as their faith; and quite necessarily so, for the world could no more go on with all its heroes in sackcloth than with all its mountains in snow: only don't let the glory of the celestial virtue be lost to us, because we are generally not expected ourselves to be better than our dogs and horses.

And further, once well understanding and admitting what even wise heathens knew, that "quanto quisque sibi plura negaverit, ab Dîs plura feret,"[2] the general tenor of our thoughts and scope of our charities will assuredly become purer and more open every day, and an "æsthetic" sense of pleasure in duty, healthily replace that which we may have cultivated in upholstery. With quite infinite gain of good both for ourselves and others.

One or two particulars respecting Zita's thoughts and ways in such matters, not found in the ballad, I add from the *Leggendario della Vita di Gesu Christo, di Maria Virgine, e de Santi*, written by a father of the Oratory of Venice, and printed in Venice in 1757.

1. Her mother's name was Buonissima,—perhaps only the constant epithet mistaken for a real name; in any case, all reports agree as to the extreme piety and worth of her parents and relations. Her uncle is named in the ballad only for this reason, as he has no part in its story. And I suppose it is broadly a physical fact that you can have no saint without the goodness of both father and mother.

2. By way of example of carelessness, the Padre says she was born in 1200, and died in 1272, aged sixty! The

[1] [See above, p. 72.]

[2] [Horace, *Odes*, iii. 16, 21: quoted also in Vol. XXIV. p. 307, and Vol. XXVIII. p. 653.]

ballad says, born 1218, and died 1288, making her seventy. A life of natural length in mid-thirteenth century is all we need remember.

3. In the course of her fifty years of service, she was never seen without a piece of work in her hand, or under it, and was accustomed to say "there is no pious servant who is not laborious."

4. She rejoiced in any kind of indignity or hardship put upon her by her fellow servants, but was wholly intolerant of the least licentious or impure talk. Her power of allaying anger was limitless—"Bastava che Zita si facesse vedere, che calmava ogni iracondia."

5. Her habit of tacit prayer was constant, "non interrompendo nè la fatica l'orazione, nè l'orazione la fatica."

6. Another miracle is recorded of her in the Venetian legend, besides the three told in the ballad,* namely, that her master having reproached her with too lavish gifts of his corn in time of famine, she took him up to the granary and showed it to him still entirely full. But I am inclined to abide in the Tuscan creed of the three miracles only; and they are all three quite delightfully easy to "explain"—if you want to. The pilgrim only meant to say, politely, that the water, drawn for him by so nice a little maid, was as good as wine;—the loaves baked by nobody had been made by her mistress, for the jest;—and the old beggar who brought the cloak back was only thought to be an angel because beggars usually don't bring things back.

Have it your own way. But this, observe, is sure, that the happy belief in these three miracles leavened the entire peasant mind of Tuscany for six hundred years; and that in the three subjects of them—bread, water, and clothing—they sum the need and good of servile labour: illustrating

* I find it was related in the ballad also, but omitted with some other passages which Francesca thought tiresome. I do not alter my text, because this fourth miracle is virtually the introduction to that of the loaves.[1]

[1] [On the subject of these miracles, see the "Postscript," below, p. 99.]

the daily thought which is right, as well as the refusal of forethought, which is right, concerning what the Christian shall eat, and drink, and put on. This also you see, that Zita attempted no miracles,—expected none,—and in her half century of service recognized or imagined none, but these typical three only; and that her habitual prayer therefore can only have been for habitual peace and blessing, strength and joy, comfort and sustenance, for all around her;—the daily bread of life to their lips and souls.

As, unwillingly, I cease from speaking of her, I chance upon a little piece of quite perfect thought about an old servant, not held a saint at all, but representing only the quiet virtue by which all things and creatures exist. It is spoken, by an old French gentleman, to a young French lady, of an old French housekeeper, over whom she is to have rule.* I would translate it if I could, but I rejoice in its being too beautiful, and beyond rendering in any words but its own:—

"Jeanne, écoutez-moi encore: Vous vous êtes fait jusqu'ici bien venir de ma gouvernante, qui, comme toutes les vieilles gens, est assez morose de son naturel. Ménagez-la. J'ai cru devoir la ménager moi-même, et souffrir ses impatiences. Je vous dirai, Jeanne, respectez-la. Et en parlant ainsi, je n'oublie pas qu'elle est ma servante et la vôtre: elle ne l'oubliera pas davantage. Mais vous devez respecter en elle son grand âge, et son grand cœur. C'est une humble créature qui a longtemps duré dans le bien; elle s'y est endurcie. Souffrez la roideur de cette âme droite. Sachez commander; elle saura obéir. Allez, ma fille, arrangez votre chambre de la façon qui vous semblera le plus convenable pour votre travail et votre repos."

Divided work and rest—so be they alike blest,—to all maids that bid, and maids that obey.

J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, *May*, 1884.

* *Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard*, p. 295.[1]

[1] [For other references to this story by Anatole France (1881), see Vol. XVIII. p. lxxi., and Vol. XXVI. p. 347.]

LIFE OF S. ZITA

PROTECTRESS OF LUCCA

ARRANGED IN OTTAVA RIMA BY GUASPARI DI BARTOLOMEO CASENTI, OF LUCCA, IN THE YEAR 1616

I

Splendor supremo, sommo Redentore,
Per cui risiede tua infinita gloria;
Concedi al basso ingegno il tuo favore,
Ajuto porgi a mia debol memoria:
Ch'io possa raccontar con puro cuore
Di Santa Zita la sua degna istoria;
Acciò che sappia ogni fedel cristiano,
Di sua nazione, e com'è in San Frediano.

II

A te ricorro, glorioso Iddio,
E di tal grazia non mì abbandonare:
Deh, porgi aiuto allo spirito mio,
Che possa in rima sua leggenda fare.
Senza il tuo aiuto niente non poss'io,
Nè strada trovo a poter cominciare,
Perciò ricorro a te, Bontà infinita,
Che narrar possa a piena la sua vita.

III

Or diam principio alla gentil Istoria,
Di Santa Zita, gloriosa e pia.
Acciò ch'ognuno ne tenghi memoria,
Saper dove gl'è 'nata e d'onde sia.
Quella che gode or l'eterna gloria,
Con altre verginelle in compagnia,
Nacque di Lucca nel felice stato,
In una villa detta Monsagrato.

IV

Fu questo l'anno di Nostro Signore,
Cioè nel mille dugento diciotto,
Venne al mondo così nobil fiore
Di buona gente ognun assai rimoto.
Una sorella avea di grand 'onore,
Religiosa; e dal mondo discosto;
Il Padre suo, Giovan Lombardo detto;
Uomo da bene, e di molto rispetto.

THE BALLAD OF SANTA ZITA

I

O Light of lights, Redeemer of mankind,
Whose glory most in mercy shines displayed,
Concede Thy favour to my humble mind,
Increase my feeble memory with Thine aid,
My heart to-day some fitting words would find,
To tell of Zita, Lucca's holy maid:
That Christians all may read her life, and how
She sleeps in old San Frediano now.

II

And so, O Light Divine, I turn to Thee.
Refuse me not the mercy I implore!
But grant me, all unworthy though I be,
To tell in rhyme the tale oft told before.
Without Thy help, too hard it were for me
Even to begin; oh give me from Thy store
A little wisdom; on Thy grace I wait,
While I this holy, humble life relate.

III

So listen kindly, friends, and I will tell,
The story of our saint, now raised so high:
And first I pray you to remember well
Her birthplace. . . . To our city it lies nigh.
She who doth in the eternal glory dwell,
With other virgin saints above the sky,
Was born, long since, in Lucca's happy state,
At Monsagrato, so old books relate.

IV

'Twas in the year twelve hundred and eighteen
This noble flower blossomed first on earth:
And in a poor man's household was she seen,
A household poor in gold, but rich in worth.
Her elder sister led a life serene
Within a convent, ere Saint Zita's birth.
Giovan Lombardo was the father styled,
A worthy parent of a saintly child.

V

La madre che la fece, era si buona,
Di giorno in giorno sempre più l'amava.
Vedendo crescere sì la sua persona
In buon costumi, e sempre Iddio invocava
Della virginità portò corona,
In Chiesa sempre ritirata stava
A contemplar d' Iddio la sua passione
Con cuor contrito e con gran divozione.

VI

Racconta il libro, Zita avea uno zio,
Uomo da bene, e di gran santitade;
Armato stava nel timor di Dio,
Di Fede, di Speranza e Caritade.
In ogni opera buona avea il desio,
Assai amava lui la povertade.
Non nominava mai Iddio in vano;
Per nome chiamato era lui Graziano.

VII

Torniamo a Zita che già cresciut' era,
Con gran pensiero di servire Iddio;
Orando sempre la mattina e sera,
Il mondo lei s'avea preso in oblio.
Un di pensando con ben mesta cera,
"Adesso levo il pane al Padre mio;
Concedimi, Signor, ch'io vadi a stare,
In Lucca, questo vitto a guadagnare."

VIII

Padre e Madre, ognun da Dio spirato,
Andò a Zita e disse: "Vuoi venire,
A Lucca a stare in un nobil casato?
Poichè vediam, che vuoi a Dio servire;
Questo sia il luogo per te apparecchiato,
Dove potrai ben vivere e morire."
Zita rispose: "Per amor di Dio,
Di grazia andiamo, caro Padre mio."

IX

Trovato il luogo ove Zita ha da stare,
Addomandata casa Fantinelli:
Nobili Signori son da praticare,
I lor figliuoli saran come fratelli:
Faranno sempre Zita rispettare,
Benefattori son de' poverelli.
Zita ringrazia Iddio di tal ventura;
Da fatigarsi subito procura.

V

Her mother was so good, that every day
She loved her better, seeing how she grew
In fear of God, and walking in His way
From earliest childhood, with devotion true.
Prayer was her great delight, she loved to stay
In church alone, and dream of all she knew
Of how God lived on earth, and how He died;
Until her heart could hold no dream beside.

VI

An uncle Zita had, of whom they tell,
That every virtue did his soul attire,
Faith, charity, and hope, did with him dwell,
And holy works were all his heart's desire.
Poor, yet content, God's name he honoured well,
Nor did to aught of earthly good aspire.
A man of humble life, and saintly fame;
And Graziano was this uncle's name.

VII

Time passed, the girl grew older, well content
To do God's work, whate'er that work might be.
Her brightest hours on her knees were spent,
And little thought of worldly things had she.
One day to saddening care her mind was lent:
"I eat my father's bread, he works for me!"
She raised her heart in prayer: "O Lord," she said,
"To Lucca let me go, and earn my bread."

VIII

And He who hears in secret, heard that prayer:
For both her parents came, the selfsame day,
And asked her, "Daughter, would'st thou now prepare
As servant in a noble house to stay?
For since to serve the Lord is all thy care,
In Lucca hath He marked thee out thy way.
There may'st thou live, there labour and there die."
"Thank God! So be it!" Zita made reply.

IX

They reached the house for Zita's home designed,
And Casa Fantinelli was its name.
A family of noble life and mind
Dwelt in it, when the saintly maiden came.
Just to their servants,—to the needy, kind.
With them her life could pass, almost the same
As with her parents. She, rejoiced indeed,
Gave thanks to God who did such grace concede.

X

Zita dal Padre suo prese licenza;
Dissegli: Adesso a casa ve n'andate.
Entrata in casa, fece riverenza
Davanti a tutte quante le brigate.
Con gli occhi bassi, sempre con temenza,
Le sue fatiche sempre anticipate;
Ascoltando la Messa ogni Mattina
Per contemplar quella Bontà Divina.

XI

Di dodici anni si mise a servire
In questa casa con molta affezione;
Nè mai ci fu chi le potesse dire,
Tu non fai quel che vuole il tuo padrone.
Andava pura e onesta nel vestire,
Non si curava mai di cose buone.
Sol le bastava ricoprir sua vita
Di cose vili, e sempre scalza è ita.

XII

Diero i padroni piena autoritade,
Niente in casa a Zita si serrasse;
Abbi ogni cosa in sua libertade,
Ed a suo posto meglio governasse.
Zita, che de' poveri avea pietade,
Con diligenza lei ben rassettasse.
Molte cose che in casa avanzava,
Quelle raccoglie, e ai poveri le dava.

XIII

Da i suoi padroni li furono date
Di molte robe per il suo vestire:
Voglian che per lei siano accommodate,
Per la gran fedeltà del suo servire.
Ed umilimente lei l'ha ringraziate,
Pigliò la roba con molto desire.
Tosto che l'ebbe li venne in desio,
Di darla a'poveri per l'amor di Dio.

XIV

E spesse volte lei cercando andava,
Se per contrada fosse un ammalato.
Se povero era, bene l'aiutava,
Del proprio cibo suo che l'era dato,
Per dare a quello, lei digiuna stava,
Purchè avesse il povero ajutato.
E de suoi panni li volea vestire
Sempre cercando per Gesù patire.

Molta roba che in casa auanzaua
Quella raccoglie ed a' poueri la daua

El spesse volte lei cercando andava,
Se per contrada forse un ammalato

X

The door once reached, she let her father go;
They said farewell, then parted; and this done,
She entered in, and bowed herself full low
Before the Fantinelli, every one:
Thenceforward toiling humbly; none might know
How long she worked before the morning sun:
Content each day, might only time remain
To hear the Mass; then back to work again.

XI

At twelve years old she did to service go,
And ever after in that house she stayed,
With love unwearied, which no change could know:
Her master's word she never disobeyed.
A humble mind her very looks might show,
So poor was all the dress of this poor maid!
The meanest garment pleased her best to wear,
And all the whole year round her feet were bare.

XII

Her master and her mistress orders gave,
That Zita should in all things have her way;
Left all in Zita's hand to spend or save,
And told her, "Do for us as best you may!"
And she, with care, and with attention grave,
Gave heed that nought were lost or thrown away;
But many things which wasted were before,
She gathered up, and gave them to the poor.

XIII

The noble family with whom she dwelt,
Did many garments give for Zita's wear:
For all within the house great kindness felt
For her who served them with such loving care.
She thanked them humbly, yet her heart would melt,
For longing with the poor such gifts to share.
And as she could, in secret, day by day,
For love of God she gave the best away.

XIV

And often through the country far she sought,
If any sick in lonely cottage pined;
She helped them in their need, and to them brought
Of her own food, the best her hand could find:
And clothed them with her garments, caring nought
For cold or hunger, but with willing mind
Gave all, and did her chiefest pleasure take,
In toil and hardship for the dear Lord's sake.

XV

Andava spesso Zita a visitare
Negli Spedali i poveri ammalati;
E qualche cosa li solea portare;
Ed ancora a i poveri carcerati.
Anco le chiese voleva onorare,
Sebbene da sua casa allontanati;
Non si curando d'esser conosciuta
Per far le sue orazioni comè dovuta.

XVI

Ogni notte in sull 'ora del mattutino,
Subito desta a San Frediano andava;
Era la Chiesa presso a lei vicino,
Cioè, alla casa, dove per serva stava.
Andava a sentire l'Uffizio Divino,
Ritirata, il suo Gesù guardava,
Pensando sempre alla sua passione,
E cosi stava con gran divozione.

XVII

Avendo una mattina dimorato,
In queste sue sante devozioni,
Zita di faro il pan s'era scordato,
Per aver posto a Dio tant' affezione.
E tosto ch'ebbe il suo perdon pigliato,
Di tal cosa li venne in menzione.
A casa se n'andò con molta fretta
A voler far il pan Zita aspetta,—

XVIII

Zita fatto e coperto quello vede,
E sopra della tavola era accommodato:
Che dai padroni fatto lei lo crede,
Lo prese, portandolo al forno diviato.
Tornata a casa pur nessun non vede,
Che nessun dal letto anco è levato.
Zita ringrazia il suo dolce Signore,
Che gli Angeli han fatto tal favore.

XIX

Essendo la Pasqua del Nostro Signore,
Della nascità del verbo Divino;
Con aspro freddo, e con tale stridore
Faceva andare ognuno a capo chino.
Zita, ch'è innamorata del Signore,
Essendo giunta l'ora di mattutino,
Si mise in punto per volervi andare,
E dal Padrone fu fatta fermare.

XV

So would she visit in her loving care,
The hospital, and all who in it lay;
Or those in prison would her kindness share;
Or to some church, it might be far away,
At times with thankful heart she would repair,
Where, all unseen, unnoticed, she could pray.
For more she loved to be with God alone,
Than have by others her devotions known.

XVI

And every morning, when but first awake,
To San Frediano straight her way she made,
For early matins, ere the day could break
('Twas near the house where she as servant stayed
Her place there in a corner she would take,
And listen till the Service all was said.
In holy contemplation lost, until
'Twas time her morning duties to fulfil.

XVII

It chanced one day,—and only one, 'tis said,—
That Zita lingered, being lost in prayer,
And quite forgot she had not made the bread,
Which on that morning should have been her care.
Till, service over, as she homeward sped,
She recollected and would now repair
Her error, so ran quickly all the way,
To make the bread, which must be baked that day.

XVIII

But on the table what did she behold?
The loaves all there, a cloth above them laid.
At sight of which was Zita much consoled,
Not doubting but her mistress had them made:
But no, the house was silent; young and old
Had slept, while Zita in the church delayed.
She could but thank her Lord, with heart content,
Who by His angels had this favour sent.

XIX

One festa, 'twas the day when Christ was born,
When most in church all Christians love to meet;
An ice-cold wind, that freezing winter morn,
Made all men go with heads down, in the street.
When Zita, with her garment poor and worn,
But heart all glowing with devotion sweet,
Set out for matins ere the break of day,
Her master called her back, and bade her stay.

XX

Rimase di ciò Zita tutta mesta,
Sperando non lasciar tal devozione
Non si curava di freddo e di tempesta,
Purchè licenza abbia dal suo Padrone.
Il Padrone tolse una pelliccia in vesta,
Vista di Zita la disposizione.
Disseli: "In dosso questa porterai,
Fuori che a me, a nessuno la darai."

XXI

Zita la prenda con piacevolezza,
Tosto spiegando l'orazione a Dio,
"A me, Signor, è troppa commodezza,
Tutta quanta contro il voler mio:
Abbi pietà della mia Fanciullezza,
Di patir per Te è il mio desio;
Poichè in tal notte, Signor glorioso,
Venisti al mondo per darci rìsposo.

XXII

"Con quella veste andò per obbedire
Il suo Padron che gliel' avea prestata,
Purchè il mattutino lei possa sentire,
Non temendo nè freddo nè brinata."
Entrando in chiesa con suo buon desire,
Nell' amore di Dio ben riscaldata,
S'incontrò in un povero mal vestito,
Tutto tremante dal freddo smarrito.

XXIII

Zita li venne di cio compassione:—
Chiamollo a se, dicendo, "Fratel mio,
Tien questa veste ch'è del mio padrone.
La terrai in dosso fin che sto qui io;
Non vo'lasciamo questa divozione;
Accompagnamoci con l'amor di Dio.
Finito il mattutin meco verrai;
In casa del mio padron ti scalderai."

XXIV

Un po' di vestarella in dosso avea,
Miseramente scalza se ne stava.
Al poverello più non attendea,
Ritirata il suo Signore adorava.
Le ginocchia nude in terra avea,
Con occhi bassi sempre lagrimava;
Pensando, il suo Gesù al mondo venne,
A che, per salvar noi, pene sostenne.

XX

Full sad she was to lose the morning prayer,
On Christmas day of all days, and did so
Entreat her master, though the snow-filled air
Was piercing cold. At length he let her go.
But, taking off the cloak himself did wear,
He did it kindly on her shoulders throw.
"Wear this," he said, "what time thou wilt remain
In church, but bring it safe to me again."

XXI

She thanked her master, and with heart content,
Set off for church amid the driving storm;
With soul uplifted, praying as she went;
And in these words her prayer at length took form.
"O Lord, behold the cloak my master lent;
Too fine it is for me, too soft and warm;
Forgive me if I wear it on the night
When Thou didst leave Thy glory and Thy light.

XXII

"The night when Thou wast born on earth so poor,
To give us peace; but, Lord, 'tis not my will,
Thou knowest I would willingly endure
More than this cold, Thy pleasure to fulfil!
So help me, keep me in thy love secure!"
Just then the church she entered, praying still,
And by the door a beggar, weak and old,
In scanty garments stood, half dead with cold.

XXIII

She looked awhile, her heart with pity led,
Then called him, saying: "Brother, come to me;
Come, take this cloak, and wear it in my stead;
It is not mine, or I would give it thee.
Then kneel beside me till the prayers be said;
Pray with me, and God's love shall with us be.
Then matins over, I would much desire
To lead thee home and warm thee by our fire."

XXIV

She said no more; her gown was old and thin,
Her feet were bare, but little did she heed:
And, praying fervently, did soon begin
To feel her heart and spirit warm indeed
For thinking how, when we were lost in sin,
The Lord Himself had pity on our need,
And how for us, on just so cold a day,
Himself on earth, a new-born infant lay.

XXV

Mattutin detto colla Santa Messa,
Ogni persona a casa se ne andava.
Zita verso il povero s'appressa,
Di ritrovarlo ben desiderava.
Di serrar il Sagrestan facea gran pressa,
E Zita fuor di chiesa l'aspettava.
A casa al fuoco lo volea menare,
E la veste al suo padron volea tornare.

XXVI

Serrò la chiesa, e fuor no'l vide uscire,
Guardò a sorte se fosse nella via;
Quando non vide il povero apparire,
Queste parole infra se dicia:
"Qualcheduno al Padron l'ha fatto udire,
Per tal causa levato a lui il sia.
Il poverin gran freddo avrà patito,
E per temenza a casa se n'è ito."

XXVII

Alzando Zita gli occhi verso il Cielo,
Dicendo: "Iddio non mi abbandonare!
Se quella veste al padron non rivelo,
Non so in che modo potermi scusare,
Della sua roba sempre avrà gran zelo,
Non si potrà di Zita più fidare.
Starà sempre in pena non dia via;
Di questo potria nascer qualche cosa ria."

XXVIII

Mentre che Zita in casa se n'entrava
Ecco venirli incontro il suo padrone!
Se avea la veste, ben lui la guardava,
Non li diè punto di sodisfazione:
Con essa Zita il Padrone razionava,
Facendoli di molta riprensione.
Mentre il padrone con lei contendea,
Giunse il mandato che la veste avea.

XXIX

Portava quella sopra le sue braccia,
Dettela a Zita, e quella ringraziò:
Era sì resplendente la sua faccia
Che tutta quella faccia illuminò.
Di ragionar con seco ognun procaccia,
Quello disparve, e niente non parlò.
Rimase ognun di lor sì consolato,
Li parve un Angel da Gesù mandato.

But just as Zita, trembling, passed the door,
Her master met her, and with searching eye
He looked to see if still the cloak she wore.
It was gone! At which his anger rose so high,
With bitter words he did his wage cut poor,
And sharp reproof, while she made no reply.
But while in loud and angry voice he spoke,
Behold appear the beggar with the cloak!

Who, thanking Zita kindly, as he might,
Gave back the cloak, like one in haste to go.
His face all changed, and shone with heavenly light
And lighted her with its reflected glow.
They tried to speak, but he had passed from sight.
No beggar he, of those that walk below!
Great comfort had he left their hearts within.
An angel of the Lord had with them been.

Mentre che Zita in casa se n'entrava,
Ecco venerdì incontro il suo padrone!
Se avea la veste ben lui la guardava,
Non li diè punto di sodisfazione:
Con essa Zita il Padron ragionava.
Facendoli di molta riprensione.
Mentre il padrone con lei contendea.
Giunse il mandato che la veste avea.

Portava quella sopra le sue braccia.
Dettela a Zita, e quella ringraziò:
Et ta si risplenderete la sua faccia.
Che tutta quella faccia illuminò.
Di ragionar con seco ognun procaccia.
Quelle disparve, e niente non parlò.
Rimase ognun di lei sì consolato.
Li parve un Angel da Gesù mandato.

XXV

Till, matins over and the mass as well,
As home from church the people turned once more,
She sought the beggar, but it now befell
The sacristan made haste to shut the door.
She waited, but he came not, strange to tell!
She sought him, as she never sought before;
For she would lead him to her fire, and then
Would give her master back his cloak again.

XXVI

The church was closed, she had not seen him pass,
She searched the street in trouble and dismay:
"No doubt while I was waiting at the Mass,
Some one who saw me" (thus did Zita say)
"Went home and told my master, and, alas!
He sent in haste and took the cloak away.
The beggar must have suffered much, and now
Has gone home cold and frightened, who knows how."

XXVII

Then said she (while new terror filled her breast),
"O Lord, I pray Thee do not me forsake!
Perhaps 'tis lost, and all must be confessed,
And I shall have but poor excuse to make.
Oh help me! I can have nor peace nor rest
Until I find, and to my master take,
The cloak which, wrongly, I the beggar lent!"
Thus saying, heavy-hearted, home she went.

XXVIII

But just as Zita, trembling, passed the door,
Her master met her, and with searching eye
He looked to see if still the cloak she wore:
'Twas gone! at which his anger rose so high,
With bitter words he did his rage outpour,
And sharp reproof, while she made no reply.
But while in loud and angry voice he spoke,
Behold appear the beggar with the cloak!

XXIX

Who thanking Zita kindly, as he might,
Gave back the cloak like one in haste to go—
His face all changed, and shone with heavenly light,
And lighted hers, with its reflected glow.
They tried to speak, but he had passed from sight.
No beggar he, of those that walk below!
Great comfort had he left their hearts within,
An angel of the Lord had with them been.

XXX

Zita ringraziava il Signor glorioso,
Di tanto benefizio, e si gran dono.
Col volto mesto tutto lagrimoso,
E di tal fallo domanda perdono.
Il padron di tal cosa fu pietoso,
Disse: "Di questo più non ti ragiono;
Seguita, Zita, il servizio di Dio,
Non farai niente contro il voler mio."

XXXI

Non dette mai al suo corpo riposo,
Cercando sempre qualche divozione,
Per servire al suo Signore glorioso:
Giaceva in terra sopra del mattone;
Parevali quel letto assai gioioso,
Più di quello che l'ha dato il padrone,
Adorna di mattrazze e di linzuola,
In una cameretta per lei sola.

XXXII

Quel letto Zita lo facea servire,
A qualche vecchierello poverino,
Che non avesse dove ire a dormire,
O fosso viandante, o pellegrino.
Seco alla stanza lo facea venire,
Sempre invocando il Salvator Divino;
Dicendo; "Padre mio, qui riposate,
E per i miei Padroni Iddio pregate."

XXXIII

Sopra una tavola Zita in terra stava,
Giacendo sino all 'or di mattutino:
In su quell 'ora alla Chiesa andava,
Al chiaro giorno tornava al poverino:
Entrata in casa quello salutava,
Dicendo: "Iddio vi doni buon cammino!
Andate colla pace del Signore,
Iddio vi salvi, e guardi a tutte l'ore."

XXXIV

Accostandosi a Zita un pellegrino,
Che per il caldo lui gran sete aveva.
Ognun di loro al pozzo era vicino,
E Zita che dell' acqua ne traeva.
Chiedendole da ber quel poverino,
Ed umilmente Zita rispondeva:
"Aspetta, Fratel mio, la vo a cavare,
Perchè del vino non ti posso dare."

XXX

Great thanks did Zita render for such grace,
To Him from whom alone deliverance came:
Then looking tearful in her master's face,
Asked pardon for her fault, with humble shame.
He answered wondering: "Zita, in this case
I cannot speak, and have no heart to blame.
Go on and serve the Lord, and as for me,
I'll not forbid whate'er the service be."

XXXI

Her only thought was how to serve God best;
And for her body ever less she cared,
When, late at night, she laid her down to rest,
The pavement was her only couch prepared.
It felt not hard, such peace her soul possessed.
Her bed was all for better service spared
(For she'd a chamber, for herself alone,
And bed, with sheets and mattrass, all her own)

XXXII

When evening came, she to her chamber led
Such aged stranger as she chanced to meet,
Some traveller who had neither roof nor bed,
Or pilgrim waiting homeless in the street.
"Here, father, rest thee till the morn," she said,
"The room is thine, and may thy sleep be sweet;
I leave thee here in peace until the day;
But for my master and his household pray."

XXXIII

So on the ground she laid her, and would sleep,
Till the bell sounding called her up to prayer.
Then, off to church, while yet the shades were deep,
The early blessing of the morn to seek.
But home by daylight, up the stairway steep,
To the small chamber and her pilgrim there.
"Farewell, and peace go with thee!" would she say:
"God keep thee safe, and prosper all thy way!"

XXXIV

A pilgrim poor to Zita came one day,
All faint and thirsty with the summer heat,
And for a little water did he pray—
'Twas close beside the well they chanced to meet—
She feared to give it, yet what could she say?
She answered humbly, and with words discreet:
"I wish, my brother, I could give thee wine,
But if the water please thee, that is thine."

XXXV

Volgendo Zita l'orazione a Dio
Fè sopra l'acqua il segno della croce:
Che fosse vino avrei molto desio,
Disse, "bevete," a lui con bassa voce.
Orando Zita disse, "Signor mio,
Fate quest 'acqua al povero non nuoce!"
Cosi cominciò a ber quel pellegrino:,
Gustando disse, "E prezioso vino!"

XXXVI

In questi versi voglio raccontare
La grand' umiltà della Beata Zita:
Se ciascheduu di voi vorrà ascoltare,
In questa istoria averà sentita.
Tutte le colpe si volea chiamare,
Per fare che la casa fosse unita;
Il padron di tal fatto s'avvedea,
Per lei restando più non contendea.

XXXVII

Sempre ha servito con amor perfetto,
E di patir per se sempre cercava;
Piccoli e grandi serva con rispetto,
Il nome di Maria sempre onorava.
Zita infermossi, e posta nel suo letto,
I Santi Sacramenti domandava,
Ch'era venuto il fin della sua vita,
Da questo mondo avea da far partita.

XXXVIII

Non fu sì tosto il sacerdote giunto,
Che Zita a tutti domanda perdono.
Presto sarà questo corpo defunto:
"A Dio vi lascio, caro mio padrone."
Zita arrivata a quell' ultimo punto,
Più non potea stare in ginocchione.
Rese l'anima a Dio con un sospiro,
Li Angeli al Cielo la porton di tiro.

XXXIX

Non fu si tosto l'anima spirata,
Per Lucca i putti si sentian gridare,
"Adesso è morta la Zita beata,"
A Casa Fantinelli vogliamo andare.
Si vide il giorno una stella onorata,
Sopra la casa risplendente stare,
Questo si nota fosse chiaro segno,
L'anima fosse giunta al Santo Regno.

A pilgrim poor to Zita came one day,
All faint and thirsty with the summer heat,
And for a little water did her pray.....
T'was close beside the well they chanced to meet.....
She feared to give it, yet what could she say?
She answered humbly, and with words discreet:
I wish, my brother, I could give thee wine;
But if the water please thee, that is thine.

This said she drew some water from the well,
And with a cross the pitcher did she sign.
Oh Lord, she said, while lowher sweet voice fell.
Let not this water hurt him, he is thine.
The pilgrim, as he steeped to drink, could tell
Her thought before she spoke. I wish t'were wine
He tasted, then astonished raised his head:
But truly this is precious wine! he said.

Accostandosi a Zita un pellegrino,
Che per il caldo lui gran sete aveva.
Ognun di lor al pozzo era vicino,
E Zita che dell'acqua ne traeva.
Chiedendole da lor qual poverino,
Ed umilmente Zita rispondeva
Aspetta Fratel mio, la vi a cavare,
Perchè del vino non ti posso dare.

Volgendo Zita l'orazione a Dio
Fè sopra l'acqua il segno della Croce:
Che fosse vino avrei molto desio,
Disse, bevete, a lui con bassa voce.
Quando Zita disse, Signor mio.
Fate quest'acqua al povero non nuoce!
Così cominciò a ber quel pellegrino.
Gustando disse, È prezioso vino!

XXXV

This said, she drew some water from the well,
And with a cross the pitcher she did sign.
"O Lord," she said, while low her sweet voice fell,
"Let not this water hurt him, he is thine."
The pilgrim, as he stooped to drink, could tell
Her thought before she spoke, "I wish 'twere wine."
He tasted, then astonished raised his head:
"But, truly, this *is* precious wine!" he said.

XXXVI

So great was her humility, that though
Unjustly blamed, she never would complain.
For faults she suffered, not her own, if so
The household might in greater peace remain.
This, in long years, her master came to know,
And did thenceforth from all hard words refrain,
For pity, seeing how the sound of strife
Was heavy shadow on that gentle life.

XXXVII

So in her master's service and God's fear,
The years of labour slowly passed away.
The name of Mary, ever blest and dear,
Had cheered her in her toil from day to day.
Then sickness came, and when the end drew near,
As worn and feeble on her bed she lay,
She sought the Sacraments, for well she knew
The journey of her life was almost through.

XXXVIII

The priest arrived, and she, her sins confessed,
Forgiveness of all present did demand.
"Farewell," she said, "I'm going to my rest,
Dear master, but I leave thee in God's hand."
No other word to any she addressed;
While weeping all did round about her stand,
Her soul to God she rendered with one sigh,
And angels bore her to her home on high.

XXXIX

That very hour in which her spirit fled,
Young children through the town began to say
(Before they heard), "The blessed Zita's dead!"
And crowd about the house wherein she lay.
A star appeared, and did much radiance shed,
O'er Casa Fantinelli at mid-day;
Which was to all a clear and certain sign
Her soul had joined the company divine.

XL

L'uno e l'altro si andavano a chiamare,
La Santa Zita a visitare andiamo!
L'ordine è dato si ha da sotterrare,
Chi andava a casa, e chi a S. Frediano.
Ognun cercava potersi accostare,
Chi per vederla, e chi baciar sua mano.
Molti per accostarsi gran forza facea,
Per torli un po' di quel ch'attorno avea.

XLI

Zita, per Lucca tua citta famosa,
Prega quanto tu puoi l'eterno Iddio;
Della grazia sua ne sia copiosa;
Ed adempisci d'ognuno il buon desio,
Per quella libertà ch' è l' alta cosa!
Questo è quanto desidera il cuor mio.
Prega per grazia il tuo caro Signore,
Ci salvi, e guardi, a tutte quanto l'ore.

XLII

Per quel rispetto che ti fu portato,
Da que' nobili Signor de' Fantinelli;
Prega per loro quel Verbo Incarnato,
Della sua grazia non siano ribelli.
E così ancor per ogni potentato,
Si ami l'uno e l'altro da fratelli.
Pregalo, Zita, questo tuttavia,
Acciò che tra i Cristiani non sia eresia.

XLIII

Il dì che morì, finisco tal tenore,
D' Aprile il ventisette l'ottantotto—
Da te fa il conto, benigno lettore—
Mille dugento finisce tal motto.
Ogni fedele se la tenghi al cuore,
La Santa Serva, a lei sia suo divoto:
Il cammin dritto a noi ci ha mostrato,
Da condurci a quel felice stato.

XLIV

Se ciò non fosse come hai tu desio,
Prego lettor mi voglia perdonare:
Per esser debol l'intelletto mio,
Non posso ogni persona contentare.
A te mi volto, glorioso Iddio,
Con tutto il cuore Ti voglio pregare
Chi della tua serva ha divozione,
Lo salvi, e guardi da tribolazione.

XL

But hardly could they bear her to her grave,
The crowd of mourning people was so great;
Some thronged her chamber, one more look to crave,
While others did in San Frediano wait
To kiss her hand, or some memorial save,
Their sorrow to console or consecrate.
Her very garments in the press were torn,
That each might have some fragment she had worn.

XLI

Zita, for Lucca, thy beloved town,
Pray God,—and surely He thy prayer will hear,—
To send on us from heaven a blessing down,
That we may serve Him, safe from every fear;
And grant us still (my heart's desire to crown)
That liberty which is to all so dear.
For this we labour all, for this we pray,
So help us with thy prayers from day to day.

XLII

And do not, Zita, in thy prayer forget
To name the Fantinelli's noble race;
Their love to thee do thou remember yet,
And may God keep them ever in His grace.
Pray for all princes that the Lord may set
Their hearts in peace, and discord find no place:
And for the Church, to dwell in faith sincere,
That every heresy may disappear.

XLIII

And now to end my tale, I must relate,
'Twas April on the twenty-seventh day,
And in the year twelve hundred eighty-eight,[1]
That she from earth to heaven was borne away.
Which day returning, still we celebrate;
And let each faithful soul due honour pay
To her whose life has made the way so plain,
The blessed country of our hope to gain.

XLIV

Now if these rhymes displease thee, reader kind,
Have patience with them, they were rightly meant.
But (being neither wise nor strong of mind),
I cannot always every one content.
Thou Lord of glory, for whose praise designed
Was all the story, to my prayer consent.
Let all who to thy Saint devotion bear
Be safe from harm and danger in Thy care.

[1] [For the translator's note on this line, see below, p. 99.]

POSTSCRIPT

I HAVE chosen, partly of purpose, partly of necessity, in arranging subjects for the beginning of the series, the feeblest of these wayside Songs, and the reader may be at first disappointed by its extreme simplicity, and often quite prosaic phrase. Let me assure him, with the authority of long practice, both in prose and rhyme;—(for I wasted several good years of my life in verse-writing when I had nothing to say[1]),—that it is not at all an easy matter to write entirely rhythmic lines of this straightforward intelligibility; and that there are twenty versifiers nowadays who can string together any quantity of symphonious twaddle and alliterate whine, for one who can write a rhythmic line in steady English, with some contents of common sense in it. Note also, that if you read Francesca's verses with sincerely attentive feeling, just as you would read, or ought to read, well-constructed prose, they will become melodious without your well knowing why; and note further, and carefully, that the additions she has made to her original, apparently only to fill the measure, are all additions of extreme value and enriched meaning.

Thus, in the 5th stanza, the Italian entirely common phrase, "con gran divozione," is expanded into "until her heart could hold no dream beside," which expresses the peculiar character of Zita's piety through all her life.

Again, in the 21st, the reader might fancy the Italian "glorioso" a vague epithet of Christ, unless Francesca had expanded it into, "On the night, when *thou didst leave* thy glory."

[1] [Compare Vol. XI. p. 233, and *Præterita*, i. § 139.]

And again in the 35th, Zita says in the Italian, only, "My Lord, let not this water hurt the *poor* man." Francesca beautifully transmutes this into, "Let not this water hurt him,—*he is thine.*"

Of the Italian itself, I am no judge, and had thought it nothing worse than a little flat, and, here and there, a little obscure; but on my questioning Francesca how she got her date of 1288 out of the 43rd stanza, she tells me

"it bears about the same relation to good Italian that one of the negro songs does to good English. At the end of the first line the word *tenore* is used for *discourse;* at the end of the fourth line, the word *motto* means 'saying,' or sentence (we have the same word, motto, in English, in a very slightly different sense); so that the verse, translated literally, would read: 'The day she died, (so) I finish this discourse, (was) April 27th, the (year) 88. Count it up yourself, kind reader, 1200 finishes the sentence.' I think the writer meant to say that she died in 1288."

The following passage from a subsequent letter sets us finally right about the connection of the four miracles,[1]—the Pythagorean addition of the pulse[2] to the corn fulfilling the idea of sustenance to all mankind:—

"*May* 15*th*, 1884.

"I also made a little mistake in what I told you myself, about the miracle of the grain which she gave away being replaced in the granary; in the Tuscan version they were *beans* which were multiplied. Pretty much the same story is told about a great many saints; the prettiest version is that of St. Isidore, the Spanish Contadino, which I will tell you some time, if you do not know it. I enjoy this page of yours about St. Zita so much more the more I read it; but who wrote that beautiful French sentence about the old housekeeper? Our friend Count Pasolini, with whom we are staying, lost an old servant, last year, at the age of a hundred years and four months. She was quite childish and helpless, but he took her death so much to heart that it made him quite ill, and put off a journey, at much inconvenience, that he might not miss attending her funeral."

I am glad of this anecdote, because in my first notes I dwelt only on the lesson of the story to Servants; and not at all on what perhaps we English stand somewhat more in need of—its lesson to Masters! All the "flunkey" ism

[1] [See above, p. 78.]
[2] [Compare Vol. XXV. p. 279.]

and "servant-gal" ism of modern days, is the exact reflection of the same qualities in the masters and mistresses. A gentleman always makes his servant gentle.[1] One fact which happened to myself I thankfully here relate, in memory of the relations existing between my dear friend Mr. Rawdon Brown of Venice, an Englishman of the old school, and his servant-friend Antonio, (of whom, and his pet dog, see farther *Fors*, No. 75[2]).

There are none of the rewarding accidents of my life's work in which I take so much pride as in having discovered the inscription addressed to the merchants of the Venetian Exchange on the church of St. James of the Rialto.[3] I had photographed it with the end of the church in which it was imbedded, submitting passively to the concealment of a letter by the descending water-pipe of a neighbouring house, which I had no hope of getting the owner to bend out of the way. When I took my photograph to Mr. Brown, Antonio was instantly summoned to share in our common triumph over this recovery of a most precious Venetian monument. Antonio examined the photograph gravely, but with qualified approbation. Putting his finger on the intrusive water-pipe, he inquired why I had not removed it before taking the plate. On my expressing doubt of the householder's permission, Antonio somewhat contemptuously requested me to leave the conduct of the affair with *him;* took a photographer and plumber with him next day to the Rialto, overawed at once the owner of the obnoxious gutter, cut a foot of it clear away, and brought me, in due course of speediest printing, six lovely plates of the entire inscription, of which one may be seen by the curious reader at the St. George's Museum, Sheffield; and another in my schools at Oxford.

With Mr. Brown's Antonio, let me, in respectful affection, name also Mr. Henry Newman's Alessandro, and Miss

[1] [Compare Vol. XVII. p. 519.]
[2] [Vol. XXIX. p. 68.]
[3] [See Vol. XXI., Plate lxii. (p. 269), and Vol. XXIV. pp. 308, 417.]

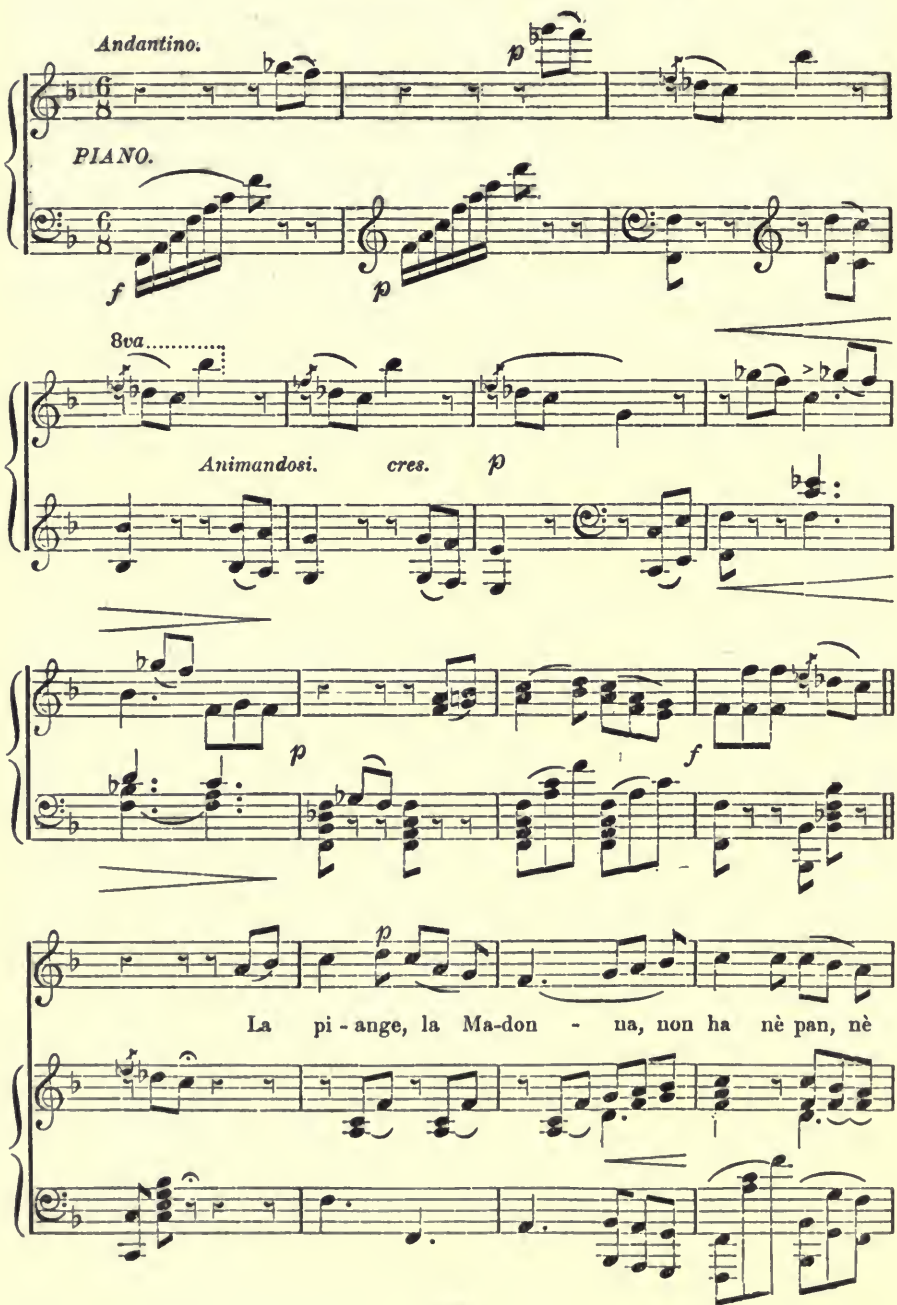
Alexander's Edwige.[1] The latter is seen with one of her children in her arms on the extreme left of the drawing of St. Zita giving alms, and both Alessandro and she are extremely useful critics on their master's and mistress's work,—Alessandro usually encouraging, but anxious; Edwige, trustful, but tenderly corrective. One day she had watched Francesca labouring long on a piece of complex foliage, with evident fatigue; the drawing also not prospering to her quiet servant's mind. At last, with mild and softly smiling reproof, "Are not you trying to do as well as the good God?" says Edwige![2]

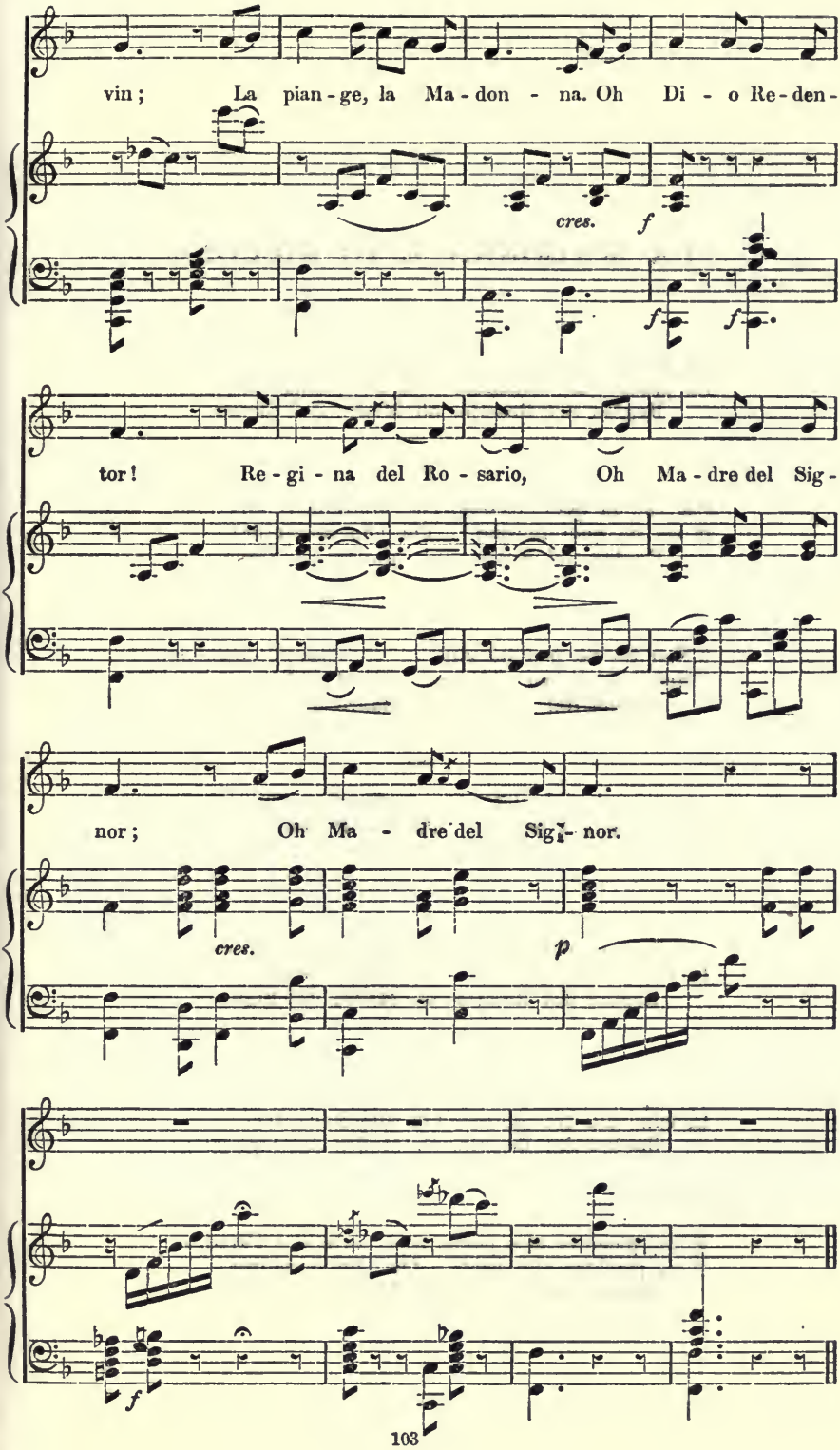
[1] [For an account of her home, see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 96, § 3 (Vol. XXIX. p. 519).]

[2] [Compare below, p. 174.]

THE MADONNA AND THE RICH MAN

(LA MADONNA ED IL RICCONE)




vin; La pian-ge, la Ma-don-na. Oh Di-o Re-den-
cres.
f
tor! Re-gi-na del Ro-sario, Oh Ma-dre del Sig-
nor; Oh Ma-dre del Sig-nor.
cres.
p
f

LA MADONNA E IL RICCONE

I

La piange, la Madonna, non ha nè pan, nè vin;
La piange, la Madonna. Oh Dio Redentor!
Regina del Rosario, oh Madre del Signor.

II

"E vai da quel riccone, che limosina ti farà;
E vai da quel riccone." Oh Dio Redentor!
Regina del Rosario, oh Madre del Signor.

III

"Non ho nè pan nè vino . . . . Cosa ti posso dar"?
"Non ho nè pan nè vino." Oh Dio Redentor!
Regina del Rosario, oh Madre del Signor.

IV

"Li bricioli del piatto . . . . Quelli mi potrai dar
Li bricioli del piatto." Oh Dio Redentor!
Regina del Rosario, oh Madre del Signor.

V

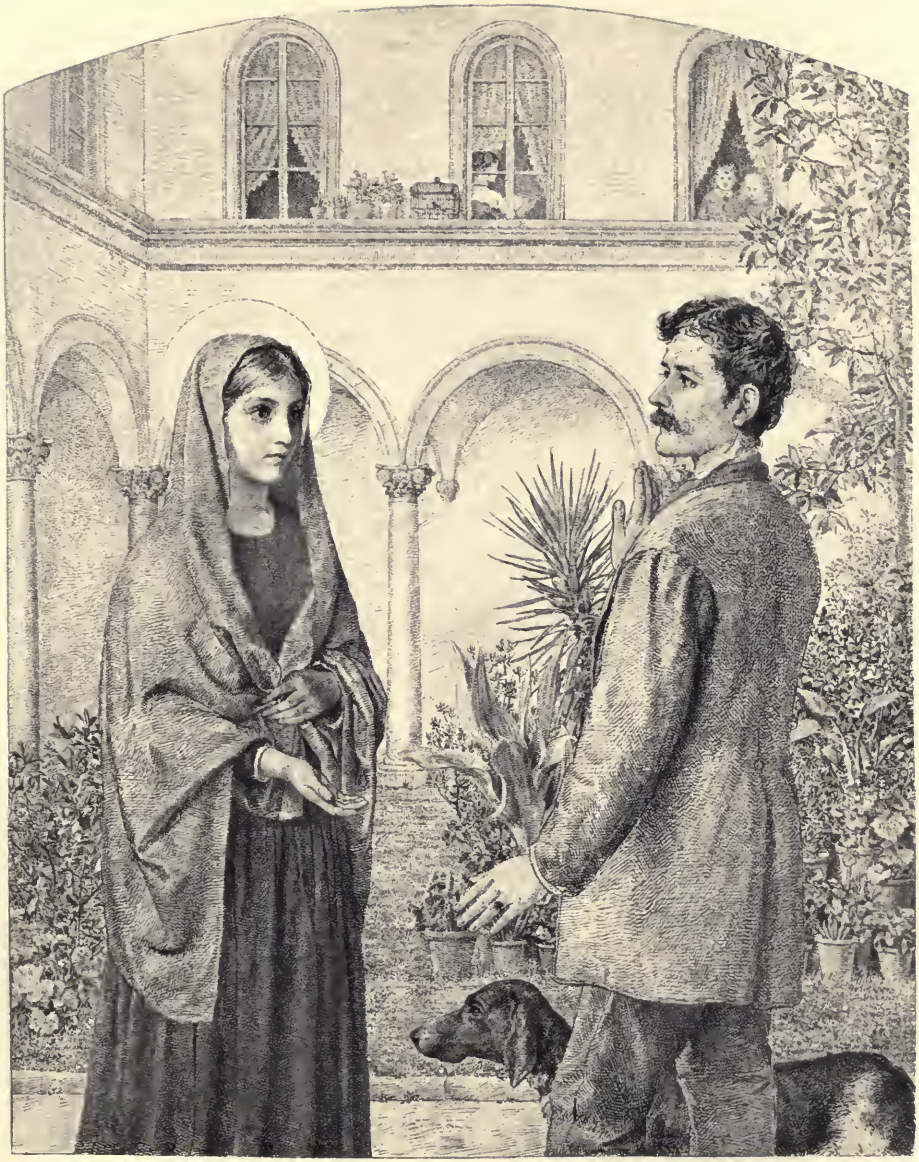
"Li bricioli del piatto son buon per il mio can;
Li bricioli del piatto." Oh Dio Redentor!
Regina del Rosario, oh Madre del Signor.

VI

In capo alli tre giorni, il Riccone mori;
In capo alli tre giorni. Oh Dio Redentor!
Regina del Rosario, oh Madre del Signor.

VII

E va, picchiar alle porte, alle porte del Paradiso;
E va picchiar alle porte. Oh Dio Redentor!
Regina del Rosario, oh Madre del Signor.



Non ho nè pan nè vino cosa ti posso dar?

THE MADONNA AND THE RICH MAN

I

She's weeping, the Madonna, she has no bread nor wine;
She's weeping, the Madonna. Oh God, Redeemer, hear!
Our Lady of the rosary, our Saviour's Mother dear.

II

"Go, Lady, to that rich man, and he will give you aid;
Go, Lady, to that rich man." Oh God, Redeemer, hear!
Our Lady of the rosary, our Saviour's Mother dear.

III

"I've nothing here to give you, I've neither bread nor wine;
I've nothing here to give you." Oh God, Redeemer, hear!
Our Lady of the rosary, our Saviour's Mother dear.

IV

"Give me the broken pieces that on the plate remain;
Give me the broken pieces." Oh God, Redeemer, hear!
Our Lady of the rosary, our Saviour's Mother dear.

V

"I keep the broken pieces, my dog can live on those;
I keep the broken pieces." Oh God, Redeemer, hear!
Our Lady of the rosary, our Saviour's Mother dear.

VI

'Twas only three days later that rich man came to die;
'Twas only three days later. Oh God, Redeemer, hear!
Our Lady of the rosary, our Saviour's Mother dear.

VII

He at the gate stood knocking, high at the gate of Heaven;
He at the gate stood knocking. Oh God, Redeemer, hear!
Our Lady of the rosary, our Saviour's Mother dear.

VIII

Disse Gesù a San Pietro, "Chi è che picchia la?"
Disse Gesù a San Pietro. Oh Dio Redentor!
Regina del Rosario, oh Madre del Signor.

IX

"È forse quel riccone, chè limosina non vuol far?
È forse quel riccone?" Oh Dio Redentor!
Regina del Rosario, oh Madre del Signor.

X

"Va, chiama li suoi cani, che li venghino ad apri . . . .
Va, chiama li suoi cani." Oh Dio Redentor!
Regina del Rosario, oh Madre del Signor.

XI

E va, picchia alle porte, alle porte dell' Inferno;
E va, picchia alle porte. Oh Dio Redentor!
Regina del Rosario, oh Madre del Signor.

XII

Le porte dell' Inferno enno tutte spalancà, ...
Le porte dell' Inferno. Oh Dio Redentor!
Regina del Rosario, oh Madre del Signor.

XIII

"Fategli un letto di brace, che si possa riposar!
Fategli un letto di brace." Oh Dio Redentor!
Regina del Rosario, oh Madre del Signor.

XIV

"Se al mondo potessi tornare, la limosina vorrei far!
Se al mondo potessi tornare." Oh Dio Redentor!
Regina del Rosario, oh Madre del Signor.

XV

La foglia quando secca, non rinverdisce più;
La foglia quando secca. Oh Dio Redentor!
Regina del Rosario, oh Madre del Signor.

VIII

Said Jesus to S. Peter: "Who knocks there at the gate?"
Said Jesus to S. Peter. Oh God, Redeemer, hear!
Our Lady of the rosary, our Saviour's Mother dear.

IX

"Perhaps it is that rich man, who would not help the poor . . . .
Perhaps it is that rich man." Oh God, Redeemer, hear!
Our Lady of the rosary, our Saviour's Mother dear.

X

"Go, let him call his dogs then, to open him the door!
Go, let him call his dogs then." Oh God, Redeemer, hear!
Our Lady of the rosary, our Saviour's Mother dear.

XI

He at the gate went knocking, low at the gate of Hell.
He at the gate went knocking. Oh God, Redeemer, hear!
Our Lady of the rosary, our Saviour's Mother dear.

XII

The gates of Hell were open, they all were open wide.
The gates of Hell were open. Oh God, Redeemer, hear!
Our Lady of the rosary, our Saviour's Mother dear.

XIII

"A bed of coals prepare him, that he may rest thereon.
A bed of coals prepare him." Oh God, Redeemer, hear!
Our Lady of the rosary, our Saviour's Mother dear.

XIV

"Would God to life return me, I then would help the poor!
Would God to life return me." Oh God, Redeemer, hear!
Our Lady of the rosary, our Saviour's Mother dear.

XV

The leaf when once 'tis faded, can ne'er grow green again!
The leaf when once 'tis faded. Oh God, Redeemer, hear!
Our Lady of the rosary, our Saviour's Mother dear.

POSTSCRIPT

THE song of the Riccone will, I suppose, offend modern charity and wisdom; I may have somewhat to say respecting it, myself, in another place;[1] but Francesca's book is to tell you the thoughts of the peasants of Italy, not mine. What *they* feel about it, we may enough gather from Francesca's following answer to a question of mine as to its origin:—

"All that I know of its history is, that many years ago, when we first came to these mountains, a blind old beggar man came along the road, led by a girl, I suppose his daughter, and she played on a curious little stringed instrument, of which I do not know the name, but I have often seen such in old pictures; I think Beato Angelico painted such a one in the hand of one of his angels. And they used to sing together, very sweetly, this song of the Riccone. They went to Pian degli Ontani, where Beatrice learned the song from them, which she afterwards taught to me. It did indeed take strange possession of her imagination, and she used to sing with the tears running down her face. But you may believe me, to hear that song sung by Beatrice's grand voice, always trembling a little as it did when she came to the place where the Riccone was turned away from the gate of heaven, was a thing never to be forgotten."[2]

For sequel to the song, take this further fragment:—

"I had a letter the other day which just went to my heart, from a young girl who works in the factory at Limestre, about fifteen miles from L'Abetone. Her father died when she was a little child, and now her mother is very ill in the hospital at S. Marcello, and the poor girl belongs to no one. I had written to ask how she was situated, and I copy for you a few words of her answer: 'I go away to my work while all the

[1] [This, however, was not done.]

[2] [This note is in part an expansion of the one in the original MS. book, where Miss Alexander adds:—

"The meaning of the story is not so clear as might be; but, if I understand it, it relates, not to any supposed event in the life of the Madonna, but to an apparition (one of those of which we hear so often) in which the Madonna, compassionating the lost state of the rich man, appeared to him in the form of a poor woman; with what result the song tells."]

stars are in the sky, and I come back when it is so dark that I cannot see, and I am cold all the time: and I never thought that I should be all alone as I am now; and the snow is on all the ground."

"Is not that a sad picture? I have sometimes heard an old person say, 'I am all alone,' and thought that I never heard any other words so sad as those; but only think of being 'all alone' at eighteen!"

Time was, I should have tried to be eloquent about the drawings in this number,[1] but will leave them now to be received as they may be; repeating but once more, that in faithful expression of human feeling, there has nothing yet, that I know of, been done like them; since the masters, commonly so-called, of art, seldom aim at expression at all, and those who seek it, give momentary states of it; while the expression in both instances, here, is of Eternal thought—the amazement, the sorrow, the judgment, in the Madonna's eyes, all of eternity,—the peace and virgin power of the pure girl, eternal also in human nature.

The reader will learn from the story of Paolina that the drawings were made from two sisters; but the Madonnina's beauty is always (as we shall find in many future instances) raised by Miss Alexander, and modified by her own imagination, according to the need. Paolina's, she tries to keep in its natural place, and often misses some of its simply mortal grace;—in no instance, she writes (page 114 below), has she been able to draw Paolina as pretty as she really is.

[1] [Namely, Plates VIII. and IX.]

THE STORY OF PAOLINA

Now I must go to another story. The pretty young girl who sits for the Madonna is named Emilia; but I must not tell the name of her family, nor where she lives, for fear that it might be heard of, and she might have as much trouble as her sister Paolina, of whom I will speak presently. I have not much to tell about Emilia (or, as we usually call her, La Madonnina); she is very beautiful, and has sat for all the Madonnas in the book.

In the little group on the fifth page (*a*), the old woman singing rispetti was taken from Beatrice in her old age, and the two young men are uncles, and the girl a cousin, of the Madonnina. They are a handsome family, but the girl sitting in the wooden chair, whose face does not appear, deserves that I should tell a little about her. She is the same who is drawn on the seventh page, in the illustration to the rispetto :—

"Quando passate il giorno della festa."

And afterwards her face appears several times in the course of the book. But I know that I shall lose my patience if I begin to write about her. . . . My poor Paolina! . . . But I must tell the story.

She is the sister of the Madonnina, her equal in beauty: not much wiser, I am afraid, than she, but as good, and pleasant, and sunny-tempered as it is possible for a girl to be. She lives on a beautiful farm, in a pretty little old house with a cypress tree beside it, and she is the eldest of eleven children; and her uncle, who lives in the house, has five more: Sixteen young people in one house, the youngest a baby, and poor Paolina the eldest! And I have known her ever since she was a baby herself, and was never so happy as when I could have her to hold; for she was the prettiest little doll that ever one had to play with. She was a very fair baby, with beautiful dark-blue eyes and a most angelic expression; and she was always bandaged into a little stiff bundle, scrupulously white and clean, showing nothing but the sweet little face and

(*a*) The fifth page, *i.e.*, of the book as it first was arranged. I leave Francesca's notices of it, in that state, untouched; as the pages, wherever they may be in future placed, will always be registered by their original number.[1] The seventh page, with its written rispetto, is the second photographed in this number. [J. R.]

[1] [Unfortunately this was not done, and—as explained more fully elsewhere (above, p. 44)—some of the original pages have disappeared, and in the American edition, which presents the book as far as possible in its original form, the pages had to be re-numbered. The "fifth page" in Miss Alexander's numbering (leaf 9 in the synopsis, p. 45) is one of those that are missing. The "seventh page" (leaf 11 in the synopsis) is here Plate IX.]

two very minute dimpled hands, just the colour of a rose-leaf. I cannot remember that she ever cried, though I suppose she must have done so sometimes; but I think she learned to smile sooner than most children, and she would go to any one.—But there is no use in thinking about all this now; I shall never be trusted with my pretty Paolina any more, that is certain.

When she was a little larger, she used to run about the farm after her father while he worked,—barefoot, in a short blue petticoat, with a ragged straw hat set all crooked over her light hair, and he would sing stornelli (*b*) to her,—he was a beautiful singer,—or would leave his work for a minute to toss her up in his arms; and one seemed just as much a child as the other. She herself, however, began to work while she was very young; at twelve or thirteen she could do as much as her mother, or more,—farm work every day, besides what she had to do on baking-day and washing-day. But she enjoyed the work as much almost as she had the play before. She was very strong and active, and very light-hearted, and nothing ever seemed a burden to her. I think the washing-day was a real pleasure to her. There was a beautiful spring on the farm, and by it they had built a large stone tank to wash the clothes; and Paolina's grandfather had built a slight roof over it, and trained a grape-vine so as to form a thick canopy, that the women might be sheltered from the sun while they worked. And her father, who had a great love for flowers, had planted a jessamine, and two or three rose bushes, and some sweet-scented herbs close by, where they could be easily watered; so it was a very pretty place indeed, and she would work away there, by the half-day at once, with her bare arms in the cold water, and think it delightful.

When she came to me, which was often in those days, she was always asking for stories; but as she never cared how often she heard the same ones repeated, it was by no means difficult to entertain her. For the younger children in the family she was a perfect providence,—never tired of them, never out of patience, never too busy to attend to their wants, or comfort them in their little troubles. But Paolina had two qualities—I cannot quite call them defects,—but two qualities, which, though they made her perhaps more interesting, it would have been better for herself and others if she had not had quite so much of. One was her extreme sensibility, so extreme that it placed her at the mercy of every one, and which seemed hardly natural in that strong, healthy, busy creature. When she came to me with the little Madonnina sometimes, I hardly knew how

(*b*) Stornello is a Tuscan word for a little proverbial song in three lines. Compare this manner of education with Baubie Clark's, in the pious New Town of Edinburgh:—

"'Who gave you leave, Baubie Clark,' went on the angry matron, 'to make yon noise? You ought to think shame of such conduct, singing your good-for-nothing street songs like a tinkler. One would think ye wad feel glad never to hear of such things again!'"—*Baubie Clark* (Blackwood, 1880), p. 40.[1] [J. R.]

[1] [For another reference to this story (by Miss Laffan), see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 90 (Vol. XXIX. p. 431).]

to please them both. The Madonnina, like many children, had a fancy for *frightful* stories, and preferred "Bluebeard," or "Marziale the Assassin," to anything else; but these stories would make the fresh colour drop out of Paolina's cheeks in a moment, and her lips tremble in a way that was painful to see. When she had to listen to any story of *real* trouble, it was worse. Sometimes at my room she would meet a child whose mother was dead, or a poor woman whose son had been taken in the conscription; and she would listen to their lamentations as long as she was able to bear it, growing paler and paler all the time, and then she would turn away and drop her face, and the tears would run down her cheeks in two streams. The other quality which I wish she had been without was her submissiveness. She would almost always do exactly what she was told, without stopping to consider very much whether the person who gave the order had any authority to give it. And this was rather a pleasant thing in her when she was a little child; but the trouble was that, when she grew older, she never knew how to change the habit. When Paolina was fifteen, a man somewhat advanced in life, who had a little money, wanted to marry her, and her parents concluded to give her to him. Of course she made no objection. I was afraid she did not quite know her own mind, and I asked her if she liked the man. "I suppose I *shall* like him," she answered placidly, "when I have married him." After two or three months her family thought it best to break off the engagement, and of course she agreed to that too. But for some time after that she did not seem very happy. Not that she was in love with the man; she was too much a child to be in love with any one; but her very gentle spirit was troubled with the idea that he had been badly treated, and that she was in some way to blame for it.

Meanwhile she was growing tall and quite grand-looking in her vigorous beauty; other men began to admire her, and were angry because she did not encourage them. The other girls of the parish, who used to crimp their hair and cut it into fringes, and ruffle their dresses, and pinch their waists, found themselves outshone by her in her simplicity, and were jealous of her. So they all began to look out for something to say against her, and the worst they could think of was that she used often to sit to me for her portrait—a thing that *they* would not do on *any* account! They were safe in saying so; I should never have asked them. But this was no great thing; unfortunately she did something about that time which was considered much more disgraceful. An artist,—I do not know who he was,—who was taking sketches about the country, strayed into the farm in the olive gathering, and as he was painting an olive-tree, he asked Paolina to stand under it and let him paint her too. This (with her usual bad habit of saying yes to everything) she agreed to do, her parents of course consenting. The artist did not finish his picture that day, and came back the next. Now Paolina had no idea that she was doing wrong, and never noticed that people saw her from the road; but it was a sad day for her peace and mine. The girls with the plain faces and crimped hair had found what they wanted to say against Paolina, and they all declared that she was a *model;* which is a very bad name indeed for a girl in this country. And then commenced a regular persecution of one of the most harmless creatures in the world. They discovered, on inquiry,

that she had sat to another artist, that his wife had lent her a yellow satin dress to sit in, (I could never see what harm there was in that yellow satin dress, excepting that I do not think it can have been becoming to Paolina, but there was a great talk made about it). To be sure, the artist's wife was her mother's former padrona, and she only sat for a favour; but it was enough for their purpose.

Complaints were made to the master of the farm, who immediately forbad her sitting any more for her portrait, even to me. Every sort of malicious and horrid story was invented about her; among the rest she was accused of dressing immodestly, on account of a bit of pink ribbon which she wore in her hair! Then the priest took it up. He was one of those priests (there are a great many) who take a special interest in the souls of the girls, and appear to think that the boys have no souls of any consequence. I asked a poor woman, one of his parishioners, the reason of this once, and she said she supposed the reason was that boys are all so bad there can be no use in trying to make them good (*c*); but I did not find the answer quite satisfactory.

So he took up Paolina as an interesting penitent, and made her leave off the pink ribbon and join the Figlie di Maria, and talked her into the belief that she had been very wicked. She believed it, of course; but she had little idea of what her wickedness consisted in, and she used to go about in those days with a look of mingled penitence and bewilderment, that would have been comical if it had not been so pitiful. I, who saw the injustice of it all, would have comforted her if I could; but my friendship was one of those "pleasures of sin" which she was expected to give up;—just about as sinful, I suppose, as the pink ribbon. She used to come to see me, though, as often as they would let her (and her father and mother took my part; but fathers and mothers can do little when one of those dreadful priests with a vocation for saving the souls of girls comes into a family); but she said little, and always went away with tears in her eyes. And then another priest came in to help, and it was all arranged that Paolina should enter a convent. She did not seem to want to enter a convent, and I was afraid she would be unhappy there, but she had been worried and frightened into that state of mind that she felt as if she would have liked to hide her face anywhere. The priest appeared to expect that she would become a second S. Teresa (*d*); and the Figlie di Maria, I am sorry to say, became quite as jealous of her as her more worldly companions had been before, and gave it openly as their opinion that their spiritual director was more interested in her good looks than in her soul's welfare. Which was very unbecoming conduct in daughters of the Madonna; I hardly think even

(*c*) The real reason is that girls are thankful to tell their feelings, and boys hate to; (besides, they seldom have any to tell.) Also, a girl can often go into a convent and not be missed, but a boy has to become the support of his family, and cannot be allowed in freaks of idleness. [J. R.]

(*d*) Is not this enough reason for his apparent "dreadfulness"? especially if he thought the chances for her were *either* to be a second St. Teresa, or an artist's model in modern Florence or Paris! Francesca afterwards says, herself, she is too hard on the priest here. [J. R.]

the boys could have done any worse. The worst of it was, that the more she was harassed and worried, and the more they took away every beginning of ornament from her dress and hair, the more beautiful she seemed to grow; she looked like a magnificent Madonna de' sette dolori. At last the wished-for day came, when so much beauty was to be, if not extinguished, at least concealed from sight. She went into a convent *on trial.* Her parents were by this time resigned; the matter-of-fact little Madonnina laughed at her, and called her *minchiona* (*e*), and I thought in my heart that the Madonnina was right. But Paolina was no fool after all; the only trouble about her was, that she had remained a child too long. But once shut up in her prison (for to her the convent could never have been anything but a prison), all at once she seemed to become aware of what she was doing, and of what others had been doing to her. The confinement was intolerable to her; and after a week of it, when she made her appearance again in her father's house, her first words were: "Mother, give me a spade, and let me go to work; I have had enough of the convent!" Soon after this, a respectable middle-aged contadino found himself looking out for a wife: he had always intended, and expressed the intention, never to marry; but his sister-in-law died, and the padrone thought they needed another woman on the farm; also his (the contadino's) mother was growing old, and wanted a younger woman to help her. So the poor man accepted his destiny, rather unwillingly; and, as he appeared to consider one woman about as objectionable as another, he requested a friend, in whom he had confidence, to "find a wife for him." And the friend recommended poor Paolina. The marriage was immediately arranged, and will take place in the autumn. Paolina says she likes the old woman who is to be her mother-in-law, and I hope she may not be very unhappy. In the picture on the seventh page,[1] the man walking behind Paolina is her father: of the woman I know nothing worth telling. Paolina's portrait is given afterwards as the dead girl in the "Soldier's love," page 36;[2] as the girl knitting a stocking on the fiftieth page;[3] in the holy water picture on the fifty-second (this looks more as she did after they began to worry her);[4] in the "Parting for the Maremma," page 60;[5] as the girl sewing, in the picture of the "Two lovers," page 62;[6] as the girl

(*e*) "Silly thing"—a certain sense of stupidity being mixed up with the idea of irresolution. [J. R.]

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[1] [That is, of the original book, as numbered by Miss Alexander; leaf 11 in the synopsis given above, p. 45. Plate IX. in this volume.]

[2] [Again, of the original book; leaf 41 in the synopsis. Plate XVI. (p. 178) here.]

[3] [For page 50 in Miss Alexander's numbering of the original leaves (not included in the American edition), see No. 58 in the synopsis, p. 45. The song which the drawing illustrates is now added (p. 242).]

[4] [Leaf 60 in the synopsis; not given by Ruskin; Plate 49 in the American edition.]

[5] [Leaf 70 in the synopsis; Plate XI. (p. 141) here.]

[6] [Leaf 72 in the synopsis. Plate 61 in the American edition. The drawing, not given by Ruskin, illustrates the song "E tanto tempo," now added, below, p. 238.]

On Sunday morn, when you are passing near,
From my half-shut window gaze unseen.
So fair, so good, so modest you appear,
My heart bows down before that face serene.
I do you reverence, and while life endures,
My heart can hold no other love than yours.
I do you reverence silent in my chest,
And only in your love my heart finds rest.

Quando passate il giorno della festa,
Alla finestra mia fo capolino:
Vi vedo tanto bella e tanto onesta,
E col mio cuore a voi faccio un inchino.
Vi faccio un inchino nel mio cuore:
Bella, solo per voi sente l'amore.
E vi faccio un inchino nel mio petto:
Bella, solo per voi sento l'affetto.

setting a jessamine at her window, page 64 (not like her),[1] and with a lily at page 92.[2] And though I think all these faces are pretty, not one of them gives even a faint idea of her beauty, which I found it entirely beyond my power to represent.

I am very thankful to have two little bits about Paolina in recent letters, with which to close her story:—

"Paolina's little brother and sister have just been in to see me, to bring me some wild flowers and tell me about Paolina. She seems happy in her married life, much happier than I expected, and has attached herself warmly to her old mother-in-law, who, having lost her own daughter, finds much comfort in Paolina's sweet gentle ways. I do not think her husband cares much for her, but he can hardly help loving her in time,—nobody could help it; and she is satisfied with little."

". . . Dear Paolina came to see me the other day, with her husband, quite happy now, and perfectly radiant in beauty. As she sat opposite to me, in her pearl necklace, with her colour as delicate as an apple blossom, I thought I never saw anything so lovely.

"It was fast-day, and they would have nothing but some bread and coffee. Enrico, a rough, good-natured bear of a contadino, finished his in about a minute, and then watched her, as she put very little mouthfuls into her little mouth, until at last he remarked: '*I* could have eaten an ox in that time.'"

[1] [Leaf 74 in the synopsis. Plate XII. (p. 142) here.]

[2] [Leaf 105 in the synopsis. Plate 93 in the American edition. The drawing, not given by Ruskin, illustrates the song "Iersera" now added, below, p. 240.]

END OF STORY OF PAOLINA

NOTES ON THE PRIEST'S OFFICE

THE longer I live in this world, natural and spiritual, the more it puzzles me; but nothing in it at present so much as the attitude of the persons summed now in the popular mind, and in the most expressive language of Europe, as "prêtraille." Not that I perceive with any distinctness what their attitude really is, but this very secrecy of it is the wonder to me,—that while the temporal powers are everywhere confiscating their estates, and the general tenor of its so-called "progressive" thought either ignores their existence, or regards it as a scandal, they suffer this robbery and insult without saying any plain syllable, or doing any brave thing for themselves: their life is as the breathing and circulation of the blood of a person in a swoon; and we who trusted in them, stand like the bystanders by fallen Eutychus, hoping against hope for the miraculous words, "Trouble not yourselves, for his life is in him."[1]

The extreme degradation and exhaustion of their power in the midst of—again I must use the qualifying "so-called" —civilized "society" is shown, it seems to me, conclusively by their absence from the *dramatis personæ* in higher imaginative literature. It is not through courtesy that the clergy never appear upon the stage, but because the playwright thinks that they have no more any real share in human events; and this estimate is still more clearly shown by their nonentity in the stories of powerful novels. Consider what is really told us of the position of the priesthood in modern England, by the fact that in the works of our greatest metropolitan novelist, it appears, as a consecrated body, not at all; and as an active or visible one, only in the figures of Mr. Stiggins and Mr. Chadband![2] To the fall of the Church in Scotland, the testimony of the

[1] [Acts xx. 10.]

[2] [For other references to these characters in *Pickwick* and *Bleak House*, see *Pleasures of England*, § 118 (Vol. XXXIII.); *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 355); and *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 29 (Vol. XXXIV.).]

greatest of Scotchmen is still more stern, because given with the profoundest knowledge of all classes of Scottish society. In *The Antiquary*, how much higher, in all moral and spiritual function, Edie Ochiltree stands than Mr. Blattergowl; in *The Heart of Midlothian*, how far superior Jeanie is to her husband![1]

The evidence of foreign romance is more fatal still; because it might have been thought that, merely for the sake of picturesqueness, and as really on the Continent a somewhat glittering phantasm, the priesthood would have sometimes mingled in the effects produced by twilight or candle-light in a modern French novel. I cannot at this moment remember a single scene of a fine story in which it appears, either for good or evil. The amiable poor are unrelieved by it; the virtuous rich unadvised. Fleur de Marie dies without its consolation, and Monsieur de Camors without its reproof.[2]

And the practical estimate of it formed by the average citizen's mind (shopkeeper or manufacturer) is more singular still. On the 19th of October, 1880, I saw the *Tartuffe*[3] played at Amiens, in the little theatre which abuts in its back yard against a remnant of the king's palace, now decorated by an enormous gas lamp, lettered "Billard" (*f*).

The play was preceded by a lecture on Molière, admirably and pleasantly given by a well-to-do Amiens citizen —presumably one of their leading wool-manufacturers, who had interested himself in matters of taste. He told the audience that in the honours of literature, with the *Tartuffe*

(*f*) My sketch of this lamp, with a little bit of the ruined palace, is given to the St. George's Guild, and at present lent to Oxford.[4]

[1] [For another reference to Ochiltree, see *Eagle's Nest*, § 222 (Vol. XXII. p. 274); for Blattergowl, *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, §§ 38, 55, 113, 119 (Vol. XXXIV.); for Ruskin's numerous references to Jeanie Deans, see the General Index.]

[2] [For another reference to Eugène Sue's Fleur de Marie in the *Mystères de Paris*, see *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 372 *n.*). To Octave Feuillet (author of *Monsieur de Camors*), Ruskin refers in *Modern Painters* (see Vol. V. p. 370).]

[3] [For another reference to Molière's "perfect play," see *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 375).]

[4] [The sketch did not remain at Oxford, nor is it in the St. George's Museum at Sheffield. It was possibly No. 73 in the Ruskin Exhibition at the Water-Colour Society in 1901.]

alone, the French could challenge the world, "et même Shakspire," whose greatest work, *Mac-Beth* (he did the "th" with ease) was greatly inferior to this greatest of Molière's; that all the other characters in Molière had passed away from present life; but the *Tartuffe* was immortal, representing human nature in its entirety, and, above all, the horrors of religion; on which text he enlarged, with accusations of the existing priesthood, which I will not record, but which the audience heard with an under-murmur of eager satisfaction.

The sight of that pit, full of unanimous blasphemy, foaming out its own shame within a few hundred yards of the altar of the cathedral which records the first Christianity of France,[1] was a sign to me of many things.

Foaming out, indeed, its own shame first; but also the shame of its shepherds. I have always said that everything evil in Europe is primarily the fault of her bishops;[2] saying in this, only what St. Gregory said a thousand years ago: see his letter to the Emperor Maurice, quoted by Milman.[3] Whatever poverty there is, begins first in the monk's having broken his own proper vow of poverty; whatever crime there is, begins in the priest's having been careless of his own sanctification. But while the faults of the clergy are open to the sight and cavil of all men, their modest and constant virtues, past and present, acting continually like mountain wells, through secret channels, in the kindly ministry of the parish priest, and the secluded prayer of the monk, are also the root of what yet remains vital and happy among European races. And this, among many other unimagined truths, Francesca's book will, in its completeness, perfectly show. I leave the stories of Ida, Lucia, and

[1] [See *Bible of Amiens*, ch. i. § 8 (Vol. XXXIII.).]

[2] [See, for instance, such passages as *Sesame and Lilies*, § 22 (Vol. XVIII. p. 72), and *Time and Tide* (Vol. XVII. p. 378), where Ruskin speaks of the neglect of the episcopal function of overseer. See also the index to *Fors Clavigera* (Vol. XXIX. p. 616) for various other passages to like effect (especially Letter 62, Vol. XXVIII. pp. 512–513). For an explanation of the present saying, see *Usury: a Preface* (1885), § 2 (Vol. XXXIV.).]

[3] [For this letter, in which Gregory traces all the calamities of the Empire to the pride and ambition of the clergy, see Milman's *History of Latin Christianity*, Book iii. ch. vii.; vol. ii. p. 128 (8vo ed.).]

Paolina, as yet without comment; when the rest are before the reader, I will try to sum their collective witness;[1] meantime, since the terms around which the passions of men have rallied, in the existing conflict between Duty and Liberty, are so many and so vague, that every title of religious function raises up a host of objectors to the word who have no idea of the *Thing*, the younger reader will find it extremely useful to consider what the words King, Priest, and Monk originally and everlastingly mean.[2]

Kinghood and Priesthood are alike the functions of persons elect to the *government* (*g*) of mixed multitudes of men; they are both of them consecrated offices, and the

(*g*) I cannot, of course, in these brief memoranda, enter on theological discussion; their purpose is only to enable the reader to understand what he is reading about; but it is necessary for him to recollect that, according to the theology of the Bible, there are two powers joined in the priest: one mediatorial, that of offering sacrifice for men to God,—standing between the living and the dead;[3] the other judicial, that of judging and punishing offences against God. The two powers are united in their utmost force in the great prophet-priests Samuel and Elijah. But we habitually think of them only in their mediatorial and prophetic, and forget their judgment power. "And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal;" "If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty."[4]

The term used by Homer of Chryses, when first he names him ἀρητήρ,[5] signifies especially this power of invoking death, or life. But no supernatural terror of this kind is connected with the office of the Roman Pontifex Maximus, the priesthood among the Romans being simply one of the functions to which any citizen was eligible, as to that of consul or dictator. The transition of the Roman pontificate into the Christian Papacy will be described, if I am spared to complete it, in the IIIrd part of *Our Fathers have Told Us*, (Araceli,) of which I will try to get the second chapter, containing the life of St. Gregory, together with the second chapter of the VIth part, (Valle-Crucis,) containing that of St. Benedict, published this year, that they may be read in connection with these Tuscan songs.[6]

[1] [Subsequently, however, Ruskin abandoned this attempt: see below, p. 223.]

[2] [For Ruskin's numerous discussions of such questions, see the General Index, under "Kings," "Priests," and "Monasticism."]

[3] [Numbers xvi. 48.]

[4] [1 Samuel xv. 33; 2 Kings i. 10.]

[5] [See *Iliad*, i. 11 *seq.*]

[6] [Ruskin is writing in the year 1884. No portion of the Third Part of *Our Fathers* was ever published. Some notes for the projected life of St. Gregory are, however, now printed from Ruskin's MS. in Vol. XXXIII. Some account of St. Benedict had been given in his lecture (1882) on Cistercian Architecture (Vol. XXXIII.); but the promised chapter was never published.]

persons chosen for them are both anointed (in Greek, Christened) in consecration, and they both require for their proper fulfilment, wisdom, virtue, mature age (*h*), social affection, and schooled discretion.

On the other hand, Monkhood, stripped of its hood, and seen in what verily "facit Monachum,"[1] implies no essential qualification of age, faculty, or virtue. Very young people may be monks or nuns,—very foolish people often are; and very wicked people, repenting, may become exemplary monks, though they can never fit themselves to be priests or kings. The thing essential to a monk is only the desire to worship God, and serve man, in any ways of which, from the time his vow is taken, he may be found capable. This feeling, however, is almost always joined with a desire for rest from the troubles of the world, and an instinct for keeping, though its servant, as far as possible out of its way (*i*). In this wish for seclusion, however, monks subdivide into two kinds,—Brothers, who live in companies under rules they are agreed upon, and Eremites, who are a law unto themselves.[2] Vulgar history continually casts its blundering invective against all alike, while it requires the most intimate knowledge, both of their writings and acts, to judge, with the slightest approach to fairness, of either body.[3]

(*h*) A king, if well brought up, may be mature for his office at eighteen; a priest, not till he is over forty.

(*i*) Nothing is more curious in the character of the First Gregory than the extreme and naïvely selfish sorrow with which he looks back from the loftiest throne of the world, to the untroubled joy of waiting on the poor in his own monastery of St. Andrew.[4]

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[1] ["Cucullus non facit Monachum": the proverb comes in Shakespeare, *Henry VIII.*, Act iii. sc. 1 ("But all hoods make not monks").]

[2] [Romans ii. 14.]

[3] [The MS. adds a note here:—

> "The modern Scot curiously thinks it entirely proper in Mungo Park to slink away from his wife and children in order to indulge his taste for travelling, but looks with pious horror upon either maid or bachelor who can suppose it possible to serve God in vowed maidenhood or bachelorhood at home."

For the reference to Mungo Park, see *Fors Clavigera,* Letter 92 (Vol. XXIX. p. 454).]

[4] [See the passages quoted by Milman (*History of Latin Christianity*, vol. ii. p. 112).]

Further, in the high offices of the Priesthood, magnificence of state is entirely needful. The most beautiful existing symbol of all priesthood is given by Tintoret, in his picture of the Presentation, in the School of St. Roch, at Venice.[1] The entire picture is one glow of crimson and gold, in the midst of which the infant Christ rests in the priest's arms on a sheet of white linen. In daily life the practical power of the Temple, Priest's Robe (*k*), and Priest's Choir, is entirely beyond dispute; but it is curiously illustrated in English and Italian history by the use made of music, metal-work, and painting by the first Gregory in civilizing the Saxons and Lombards.[2] To this day, part of the treasures of his friend the Lombard queen, Theodolinda, may be seen at Monza:[3]—his gifts to Bertha of England, (the great granddaughter of St. Clotilde) founded the library

(*k*) See the lovely tradition of St. Martin, *Bible of Amiens*, chap. i., pp. 26, 27.[4] Of the manner in which the use of splendour is disputed by the typical modern English Protestant, ignorant alike of painting, sculpture, and music, and complacent in the drab of his individual Papacy, I am content to give two examples, from the professedly temperate writings of an entirely well-meaning, and, according to his knowledge, conscientious author.

"Music, and painting, and pantomime, and a tinsel declamation, must do their several parts to disguise the subduction of the essentials of devotion. The laity, having nothing to transact with God, must be amused and beguiled, 'lest haply the gospel of His grace' should enter the heart, and so the trading intervention of the priest be superseded."

. . . . . .

"If it be for a moment forgotten, that in every bell, and bowl, and vest of the Romish service, there is hid a device against the liberty and

[1] [No. 7 in the series as described in the *Stones of Venice* (Vol. XI. p. 409). There are studies from the picture by Ruskin at Oxford: see Vol. XX. p. 23 and *n.*]

[2] ["He introduced a new mode of chanting which still bears his name. He formed schools of singers which he condescended himself to instruct, and from Rome the science was propagated throughout the West; it was employed even to soothe and awe the barbarians of Britain. Augustine, the missionary, was accompanied by a school of choristers educated in their art at Rome" (Milman, vol. ii. pp. 114–115). "Augustine and his followers met the King with all the pomp which they could command, with a crucifix of silver in the van of their procession and a picture of the Redeemer borne aloft" (*ibid.*, p. 230). The picture was painted and gilded (Stanley: *Historical Memorials of Canterbury*, 1855, p. 16). See also Montalembert's *Monks of the West*, 1867, vol. iii. p. 346. The original source is Bede, i. 25. Compare *Pleasures of England*, § 29 (Vol. XXXIII.).]

[3] [Compare Vol. XX. p. 363.]

[4] [The reference is to the first edition: see now § 26 (Vol. XXXIII.).]

of Canterbury;[1] and their effect remained in the Saxon mind until another French princess, by the pictures in her missal, began the education of Alfred.[2]

But these treasures of the Priest's state, observe, are never his own, any more than Aaron's breastplate or the gold of the Ark was his own. Absolute personal poverty is the law alike for Priest and Monk; and the entire vitality of Church discipline depends on the observation of this law (hence the prophetic earnestness of St. Gregory in punishing the first violation of it) (*l*); but for the most part, the duty of the Monk is in literal and total poverty; that of the

welfare of mankind, and that its gold and pearls and fine linen are the deckings of eternal ruin; and if this apparatus of worship be compared with the impurities and cruelties of the old polytheistic rites, great praise may seem due to its contrivers."—(*Natural History of Enthusiasm.*[3])

(*l*) It is interesting to see the view taken of St. Gregory's conduct in this instance by an English well-beneficed divine:—"Gregory became abbot, and that severe discipline which he had imposed upon himself, he enforced with relentlessness, which hardened into cruelty, upon others. . . . The most singular history of this discipline, *combining ingratitude and cruelty, under the guise of duty,* with a strange confidence in his own power of appeasing the Divine Wrath, and in the influence of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, is the death of Justus, related by Gregory himself."[4] Thus Dean Milman, very certain that he, for his part, has no power of appeasing Divine wrath,—that the Eucharistic sacrifice is feebly influential at the metropolitan altar of London,—and that his own amiable feelings to his friends could not be altered by any sense of duty. He proceeds:—

"Before he became a monk, Justus had practised physic. During the long illness of Gregory, Justus, now a monk, had attended him day and night, with affectionate care and skill. On his own deathbed, Justus betrayed" (confessed, the Dean means, but does not like the word) "to his brother that he possessed three pieces of gold. This was in direct violation

[1] [See Bede, i. 29, quoted by Montalembert in his *Monks of the West*, vol. iii. p. 362 (English ed. 1867). Gregory "sent to Augustine a new monastic colony, provided with relics, sacred vestments, priestly robes, the ornaments of the altar, and all that was necessary to give effect to the pomp of religious service. He sent also books (*nec non et codices plurimos*), which were intended to form the nucleus of an ecclesiastical library. . . . In the days of Henry VIII. the books were still spoken of with admiration. In the library of Corpus Christi College at Cambridge, there is a Latin MS. of the gospels which, according to tradition, is the copy brought from Rome by St. Augustine in 596."]

[2] [For the story of the French princess Judith teaching her stepson Alfred to read out of a MS. of Saxon poetry, see "Addresses on Decorative Colour," Vol. XII. p. 476.]

[3] [For other references to this book (1829) by Isaac Taylor, see *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 452), and *Præterita*, ii. § 53.]

[4] [*History of Latin Christianity*, Book iii. ch. vii.; vol. ii. p. 104.]

Priest only in exemplary simplicity of domestic life. By the great primary Commander of the Faithful, the offices of Priest and King were borne in equal simplicity; and the Caliph Omar leaves Medina to receive the surrender of Jerusalem, "mounted on a red camel, which carried, besides his person, a bag of corn, a bag of dates, a wooden dish, and a leathern bottle of water. Wherever he halted, the company without distinction was invited to partake of his homely fare, and the repast was consecrated by the prayer and exhortation of the Commander of the Faithful" (*m*).

of the law of community of property established in the monastery." (There was no law of "community of property" in a Benedictine monastery. There was a law against having any property at all. What the Benedictine held, he held for God and the poor, for education, hospitality, and help to all men. His cowl and dish belonged to *him*, no more.) "The money was found concealed in some medicine. Justus died unabsolved, and the brethren were forbidden to approach his deathbed. The body was cast out unburied, with the gold, the brethren invoking over it the curse, 'Thy money perish with thee.'"[1]

How extremely cruel to Justus, the Dean thinks. But Justus died not a day the sooner; he was absolved thirty days afterwards; and that *his* money should die with *him*, was perhaps well for more than Justus. We will read farther before we accept the theory of ingratitude and cruelty!

With this exception, however, and one other,—the estimate of monastic vision as "the poetry of those ages,"[2]—Dean Milman's record of St. Gregory is just, and may be consulted with advantage by readers who could not accept the unsifted legend as given by Montalembert.[3] The following sentence, with which the biography of Gregory opens in the seventh chapter of *Latin Christianity*, is at once the most generous and sagacious I have ever met with in a Protestant writer.

"It is impossible to conceive what had been the confusion, the lawlessness, the chaotic state of the middle ages, without the mediæval Papacy; and of the mediæval Papacy the real father is Gregory the Great. Christianity had converted the Western world—it had by this time transmuted it: in all except the Roman law it was one with it. Even Leo the Great had something of the Roman Dictator. Gregory is the Roman altogether merged in the Christian Bishop."[4]

(*m*) Gibbon, chap. li. Compare the foregoing general description of the Caliphates of Abubeker and Omar: "The pride of their simplicity

[1] [*History of Latin Christianity*, Book iii. ch. vii.; vol. ii. p. 105.]
[2] [*Ibid.*, p. 104.]
[3] [See Book V. (vol. ii.) of *The Monks of the West from St. Benedict to St. Bernard*, by the Count de Montalembert (7 vols. 1861–1879), and for other references to Montalembert, see the notes for *Ara Cœli* in Vol. XXXIII.]
[4] [*History of Latin Christianity*, vol. ii. pp. 101–2.]

The highest offices of the Christian priesthood have, as a matter of fact, been always best sustained by men who were monks and priests in one; but from the general history of mankind, there is a law deducible which terminates, once understood, the idle disputings about celibacy of "clergy," (as if the various and infinite orders of men included under that vague word could be legislated for in the same sentence!). The broad testimony of past events is conclusive that the perfect priest should be married, and the perfect monk, unmarried.

The *Iliad* begins with the history of the daughter of Chryses; the pontificate of Joseph is perfected in his marriage with the daughter of Potipherah; and that of Moses begins in his winning the daughter of Jethro. The fall of the Jewish priesthood is virtually summed in the apostacy of the sons of Eli and Samuel; the Christian dispensation is announced by the pure lips of the son of Zacharias.[1]

In the general discipline of the Church, it is necessary, not only that the Priest should be married, but that he should live a happy and serene domestic life; in order that he may be, not the mere rebuker of men,—far less their accuser,—but that he may, in the power of the Holy Spirit, be their Comforter (*n*).

insulted the vain magnificence of the kings of the earth. On the Friday of each week, Abubeker distributed the residue of his own and the public money, first to the most worthy and then to the most indigent, of the Moslems. The remains of his wealth, a coarse garment, and five pieces of gold, were delivered to his successor, who lamented, with a modest sigh, his own inability to equal such an admirable model. Yet the abstinence and humility of Omar were not inferior to the virtues of Abubeker; his food consisted of barley-bread or dates, his drink was water; he preached in a gown that was torn or tattered in twelve places, and a Persian Satrap, who paid his homage to the conqueror, found him asleep among the beggars on the steps of the mosque of Medina."

(*n*) Study the life of the Swiss parish-priest, Gotthelf, in which the only allowed luxury was the gilding of the book for the register of marriages. (*Fors Clavigera*, June, 1873; p. 2.[2])

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[1] [For the Bible references here, see Genesis xli. 45; Exodus iii. 1; 1 Samuel ii. 12; 1 Samuel viii.; Luke i. 13.]

[2] [Letter 30: see now Vol. XXVII. p. 546.]

On the contrary, the Monk's voice is essentially "in deserts,"[1] so far as he is weak, in flight from the world; so far as he is strong, in warning to it, or testimony against it, under Heaven's inspiration. When monk and priest are alike corrupted, the prophets prophesy falsely, the priests bear rule by their means, and the day is near that brings the end thereof.[2]

With these general data, I leave the reader for a while to his own reflections on the people he will make acquaintance with in Francesca's stories, and on the circumstances which have made them what they are. Respecting the causes of the confusion in modern European Churches, I leave him also to draw such conclusions as the foregoing statements of general ecclesiastical law may, to his own mind, suggest or justify; praying him only, in so far as he has been indignant at the faults of the clergy, or provoked by their interference, to weigh with care the mischief arising from the weaknesses of a class of men desirous on the whole of doing good, as compared with that arising from the general folly and fault of mankind. For one girl who has been harmfully influenced by her clergyman, how many by their milliners? for one life which has been extinguished in a monastery, how many on the battle-field? for one heart which has sickened in religious enthusiasm, how many in wanton love?—and for one youth or girl who has been misled by priest or pastor, how many have been crushed by the neglect, infected by the folly, or sacrificed to the ambition of their parents? If, from the false teacher, their blood shall be required,—how much more of those whose iniquity is visited on them to the third and fourth generation?[3]

JOHN RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, *20th July*, 1884.

[1] [Luke i. 80: see *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iii. § 26 (Vol. XXXIII.).]
[2] [Jeremiah v. 31.]
[3] [Genesis xlii. 22; Exodus xx. 5.]

POSTSCRIPT

READ, for final witness to all I have tried to say in the foregoing notes, the following passage, from a recent letter of Francesca's:—

"To-day I saw, for the first time, a man who passes for a saint, and looks as if he might be so; the patriarch of Venice.[1] He was just going to his gondola: a grand-looking man, not so old as I had expected, dressed all in a long red robe. His face was full of goodness; as he reached the steps, all the people in the calle crowded about him to kiss his hand and ask his blessing; priests, well-dressed ladies, men going to their work, ragged little children. Some caught the border of his dress and raised it to their lips; some dropped on their knees; he could hardly liberate himself from them, but was very kind and gentle and patient with them all. It was a pretty sight; they say he leads the life of a hard-working parish priest rather than a bishop, and is loved here beyond all expression."

[1] [Domenico Agostini, previously bishop of Chioggia, patriarch of Venice 1878, created a cardinal 1882, died 1891. For a further account of him, see below, p. 304.]

FLOWER OF THE PEA

THE two drawings given in this number,[1] though not possessing all the higher qualities which Miss Alexander attains in her rendering of devotional subject, are faultless in their own kind, and exactly expressive of her peculiar skill and feeling. To myself they are of the most singular interest, in rendering precisely what I always saw, and tried to describe in my early writings, of natural beauty and expression, whether in animate or lifeless things. They are exactly what, before Pre-Raphaelitism was heard of, I defined in the chapters on Truth, in *Modern Painters*,[2] and pleaded with artists to try for; surely knowing then, what I only more thoroughly and intimately know, after forty years of labour, that such art is the needfullest for all present help and teaching of our people;—and the best antidote to the fury and vice, alike of our withering caricature, and sensual imaginings, in what we suppose to be poetical composition.

I am able to speak of these two drawings as faultless, because Francesca's carelessness of light and shade enhances, rather than injures, the clear local colour and serenity of open air in both of them, and because, while there are often slight errors in gesture or position in her management of groups, the dignity of Isabella's rest, and the firm tenderness of the girl's slight stoop towards her lover, are here given with entirely errorless perception and sympathy.

The little love song which the portrait of Isabella illustrates, better read in Francesca's pretty writing than in

[1] [Namely, "Isabella of l'Abetone" (X.) and "The Lovers' Parting" (XI.).]

[2] [See the first volume of that book (published in 1843): Vol. III. And compare *Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism*, § 16 (Vol. XXXIV.).]

print,[1] is to my mind infinitely beautiful, both in its expression of the idea of the Sabbath—the day of Rest in the perfectness of creation; and of the Rest of true love in fulness of sacred joy. But together with it, read those under the Lovers' parting, and then the following little stornelli, rendered into as sweet English by Francesca in this piece of letter just received from her, and then, the following song, "Non vi Maravigliate," to excuse all our shortcomings,—Beatrice's, Francesca's, and mine.

"People who are not Tuscans call rispetti stornelli; but they are really quite different things. A real Tuscan stornello is a song or verse in three lines, like this pretty Florentine one:—

'Avevo un fiorellin, mi s'è appassito;
Avevo un cuore, e me l'hanno rubato;
Avevo un damo, e questo m'ha tradito!'

which I translate, rather literally than poetically:—

I had a little flower, I saw it fade;
I had a heart, 'twas stolen from my breast:
I had a love, and me he has betrayed.

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[1] [Part of the song, thus written, appears under the drawing (Plate X.). On the preceding page in the original book (Plate 90 in the American edition), Miss Alexander gives the Italian and English words, thus.—

"Lunedì mi parete un bel fiore,
Martedì, una vermiglia rosa,
Mercoledì, un bel giglio d' amore,
Giovedì, una pietra preziosa,
Venerdì risplendente più del sole,
Sabato, di beltà pass' ogni cosa;
Poi, Domenica, quando voi passate,
Siete più bella dell' altre giornate."

On Monday to a flower I do compare
My love; on Tuesday to a rose new blown
On Wednesday to a lily tall and fair;
On Thursday to a rare and precious stone.
On Friday she's like sunshine in the air;
On Saturday her beauty stands alone.
And when on Sunday in her face I gaze,
She's fairer then than all the other days."

The song "was taught me," Miss Alexander adds, "by Clorinda Amidei of Faidello." A somewhat similar song is No. 147 in Tigri's collection.]

Lunedì mi parete un bel fiore,
Martedì, una vermiglia rosa,
Mercoledì un bel giglio d'amore,
Giovedì una pietra preziosa:
Venerdì risplendete più del sole,
Sabato, di bellà pass'ogni cosa.

Often a stornello begins with the name of a flower, like this:[1]—

'Fior di piselli,
Avesti tanto cuore da lassarmi?
Innamorati siam da bambinelli!'

which I should put into English—

Flower of the pea,
We were but children, and we loved each other.
What heart is thine, if thou canst go from me?

"In singing stornelli, one person sings the verse alone, and then all join in the chorus; then another takes it up and sings another stornello. When we lived in the country near Florence, it used to be very pretty to hear the contadini, in the time of harvest or of the olive gathering, singing and answering each other with stornelli, from tree to tree, or from field to field. There are various stornello tunes, nearly all pretty, but the prettiest is the one with the chorus—

'Oh biondina, comè la va!'"

[1] [English readers will hardly need to be reminded that Browning introduces such stornelli into *Fra Lippo Lippi:* "Flower o' the broom," "Flower o' the quince," "Flower o' the rose," and "Flower o' the clove."]

NON VI MARAVIGLIATE

Non vi maravigliate, giovinetti,
S'io non sapessi troppo ben cantare;
In casa mia non c'eran maestri,
Nè mica a scuola son ita ad imparare.
Se volete saper dov' era la mia scuola,
Su per i monti, all' acqua,—alla gragnuola.
E questo è stato il mio imparare,
Vado per legna, e torno a zappare.

IL COLOMBO

Colombo che d'argento porti l'ale,
Riluce le tue penne quando voli;
Il tuo bel canto lo vorre' imparare,
Il tuo bel canto e le tue rime belle;—
Il sol va sotto e dà luce alle stelle:
Il tuo bel canto e le tue belle rime;—
Il sol va sotto e dà luce alle cime.[1]

[1] [These Rispetti, with another shorter one (not given by Ruskin, but now added, below, p. 236—No. i.), are on leaf 12 of the original MS. book, with the following note:—

"All from Tigri's collection, but I learnt the first from Beatrice before I learnt it from him. She used to sing it whenever any one asked her questions about her own life or her own poetry. The second seems in the original to have a line wanting. I have remedied this as well as I could in the translation."

In the original book, the last two lines of "The Dove" are different:—

"And while you sing, how sweet the music drops!
The sun goes down and lights the mountain tops."

"Tigri's collection" is *Canti Popolari Toscani, raccolti e annotati da Giuseppe Tigri*, Firenze, 1856 (3rd ed. 1869). The two Rispetti here given are Nos. 50 and 5 in his collection (3rd ed.). On the first one, improvised by Beatrice, see above, p. xxvi.]

YOU ASK ME FOR A SONG

You ask me for a song, then be content,
With little grace, in all I sing or say;
And judge me kindly, for I never went
To school, and masters never came our way.
The only school where ever I did go,
Was on the mountain, in the hail and snow.
And this, alas! was all they made me learn—
To go for wood, and dig when I return.

THE DOVE

O dove with wings of silver, when you fly,
The feathers shine and glisten in my view:
And oh, how sweet your song is! Would that I
Could learn it. . . . Teach me, dove, to sing, like you,
Your pleasant notes, and your sweet rhymes of love;
The sun goes down and lights the stars above.
Your pleasant notes, and your sweet rhymes of love;
The sun goes down and lights the snows above.

THE STORIES OF ISABELLA AND ARMIDA

I MUST say a few words about the original of the Samaritan woman,[1] who is one of my Abetone friends, and lives with her old mother at Fonte alla Vaccaja, which is a cold and very bountiful spring, coming out of the hill-side, and flowing, in part, into a trough by the roadside formed of a hollow log. That is the way all along the Abetone road: there is no regular village for several miles, but wherever there is a good large spring, there is a little settlement, just two or three houses.

There are only two at Fonte alla Vaccajá; and in one of them, under some cherry and mountain ash trees, Isabella,—that is her name—lives with her mother, and with her married sister and her sister's family. By the way, her sister is Gigia Zanni, the gipsy.[2] So Isabella must be a half-gipsy herself, though she is of a stronger build than most of them, and perhaps takes more after the Tuscan side of the house. In winter she works, with the other women of the country, in clearing the snow from the government road which goes from Pistoia to Modena, and passes l'Abetone at its highest point. Sometimes the snow falls so deep, in those high Apennines, as to obliterate every trace of the road; and a row of tall black poles has been planted, so that, in any case, travellers can find their way by these, and not wander away and be lost. After any fall of snow the women come out like snow birds, and for the same reason, to pick up a meal, even though it be a poor one: each one carries a large flat wooden spade, made for the purpose, and they work in companies. When there is a mild winter, and little snow, sometimes the poor women are reduced to great want, having no other means of earning anything; until toward the spring, when the *dormienti* come, a sort of mushroom, which grow under the snow, and can be sold for a good price. I knew a little child (I think about nine years old), one of several children belonging to a poor widow, who would go out on a spring morning all by herself, and gather a great basket of dormienti, as many as she could carry (she knew where they grew), and take them to Cutigliano, seven miles off, and sell them for six or seven francs, and take the money all safe to her mother; and she was a delicate-looking little girl, and small of her age.

But to go back to Isabella. She often works in the snow when it is so cold that her hand freezes to the handle of her spade, and she cannot detach it until she goes into the house, and wets it with cold water, and warms it gradually. In summer she sometimes goes barefoot to cut grass —like Eurydice, only Orpheus is unfortunately wanting; and more frequently still, to gather loads of wood, which she stores up for the long winter. When the fir trees on the government land are cut down, the branches are all cut off, that the trunks may be more easily transported, and these are sent away, mostly to Livorno, where they are sold for masts of ships, or to make beams for houses: and the branches are all left lying

[1] [Plate XVIII.]

[2] [For whom, see below, p. 144.]

on the ground, and those who will, carry them away. The women and children work all summer that they may have a sufficient pile of wood to last all winter; and *such* loads as they carry on their shoulders! Isabella would like to go to service, and in that case would have, no doubt, a much easier life; but she says that she will never leave her poor old mother, who is now at the very extremity of life. Isabella is the youngest of her twelve children, and of the others, some are dead, some married and gone away; one or two have been anything but a comfort. Gigia is with her, and is very kind and good; but she has her hands more than full with her own family. So Isabella gives her whole life to her mother, and when not working for her, spends her time in her company; and I have never seen her at any of the dances, or other entertainments of the country. But there seems to be a blessing on her laborious life, for *she is certainly one of the very happiest people whom I ever knew,* and never seems to feel her lot a hard one. Her picture comes once again as an illustration to the rispetto, "Lunedi mi parete un bel fiore," at page 91;[1] but I think the Samaritana is a little the most like her.

. . . . . .

One other thing I want to tell you, because it is a great pleasure among so many that I owe to your kindness,[2] that my dear Isabella is *not* going to shovel snow this winter. She brought on a heart complaint last winter by overwork and exposure to the cold, but she is not too ill to recover, if she can rest and take moderate care of herself. I wish you could see Isabella—she is so much more beautiful than the picture, which cannot give her bright smile, and white teeth, and the brilliancy of her eyes. I am so glad she is not going to shovel snow again, under one of those government overseers, they are so hard on the poor girls! I know one, who, if a girl goes into the house to warm herself for ever so few minutes, fines her a *quarter* of her day's wages (only sixty centimes in all!). And they have to work from seven in the morning until dark, taking out one hour for their dinner of polenta. I think Isabella would have died, if she had done it this winter, and her life was worth saving.

You may perhaps care to hear something more of the child who used to sell mushrooms at Cutigliano. This little girl was named Armida, and she was the second in a family of five, belonging to a poor widow, Irene Zanni. Her father was a handsome, strong, rather wild-looking man;—I think, of gipsy descent. Sometimes, at a festa, he would drink more than he should have done, and when, on those occasions, as would sometimes happen, there was a fight between the Tuscan and Lombard part of the company, he, with his great strength and lightness, was something terrible to the rather heavier and more massive Lombard shepherds. At other times he was a great man for work, and seems to have been pleasant and affectionate, at least in his own family. He married (as might have been expected) a woman exactly his opposite; a fair, placid, orderly woman, daughter of the old forest guard, Beppe Ferrari; and left the world at last, poor man, on the day that his youngest child was born into it. He had

[1] [In Miss Alexander's numbering of the original MS. book; leaf 102 in the synopsis (above, p. 46). In this volume, the "illustration" is Plate X.; the "rispetto" is added on p. 128 *n.*]

[2] [See the Introduction; above, p. xxii.]

been ill, was recovering, and went to his work, constrained by the need of his family, before he should have done so, which brought on a relapse. Poor Irene left her bed, and her baby an hour old, to be present when the last sacrament was administered to her dying husband, and a few hours later, he was gone. Irene was very quiet in her grief, showed it principally by growing thin, and went to work steadily and courageously for her little brood.

Of all this sad story we knew nothing until we went back to l'Abetone in the summer, when we found the whole family in the depths of want, and the poor baby with nothing but some bits of rag wrapped about it (in which condition it looked uncommonly pretty, and seemed perfectly contented). Armida, then just seven, was a pretty, very small child, with fair hair and delicate oval face like her mother, but with her father's bright black eyes. She was very quiet, very light and delicate, I used to think I could have lifted her with one hand; she had a watchful look in those bright eyes, as if nothing ever escaped them; she was gentle and motherly with the babies, and she shared all her mother's burdens from the first, as if they had been two women of the same age. Her elder sister Esther suffered from what is the most common illness in this high fine air—heart complaint. She did what she could to help her mother, but it was little; the principal burden was laid on little Armida. In the summer time she used to pick strawberries for us, and she knew every place, for miles round, where the first berries ripened, or where the last ones lingered.

Now it happened that, in the summer when Armida was eight years old, we stayed at Pian Sinatico, four miles down the road, and Armida never failed to bring us our basket of strawberries every day. No one else could ever pick such strawberries as those, all so large and sweet, and shedding such a perfume all about the house when we took off the fresh young fern leaves with which she used to cover them, to keep flies and dust away from them in the road; and there was never one under-ripe, nor over-ripe, nor any sticks and leaves among them. We were all fond of little Armida in the family; and besides, her cousin, Lena Ferrari, was living with us as a servant, that year, and she was never tired of making much of the little creature. Always Lena used to give her her dinner; but Armida seemed shy about eating before us. She liked a glass of milk, and would sit down by the fire and drink it in very little sips, taking quite a long time about it; but anything else she would ask leave to take in her hand and eat by the way. So Lena used, after she had taken the strawberries out of the basket, to fill it with bread and meat, and cake and fruit if we had them,—generally the best of everything in the house found its way into Armida's little basket,—and then the child would say, "Thank you," and make a demure little bow, and go away, shutting the door very softly behind her. One day—I shall never forget it—there was a terrible storm, the rain coming down in sheets, and wearing the steep road into gullies, and I had gone to the window to look at the grand sight, when I heard a little tap at the door, and looking, saw on the door-step a man's coarse jacket, very wet, apparently standing alone; but a second look showed me, underneath it, a pair of very diminutive and pretty white feet. The road was deserted, not a man had courage to face that storm; but Armida and the strawberries had come their four miles! Lena was at the door before me, much agitated,—Armida, not at all so! She looked to see if the strawberries

had kept dry under their fern leaves, and finding that the rain had not reached them, seemed quite contented. Lena took off the wet jacket, which she had drawn over her head so as quite to cover her, and seated the dripping child in the chimney corner; then burst into tears, and exclaimed, "May God take care of our fathers!" (*a*) In those days there used to be an idiot about the roads, a man of horrible appearance, who used to wander over the country, giving a strange sort of cry, something between a moan and a howl, like a wild beast; he only differed from a wild beast in being more malicious. He seemed to have had a certain dull sense of his own fearfulness, and to take an awful kind of pleasure in it; he always liked, more than anything else, to frighten children. One day this unearthly creature met Armida, as she was leaving the village, and said to her, "Some day when I meet you I am going to kill you, and strip off your skin, and hang it upon a pole by the road." The child looked up with her bright eyes into the frightful vacant face, and answered: "No, you will not; you will never do me any harm." At this, a woman standing near by, said to her out of simple mischief: "Do not be too sure, he did that very same thing to a little girl the other day!" All this sounds very ridiculous to us, but poor Armida believed it, and what was she to do, obliged to walk that long solitary road every day? The gain that she made by her strawberries was of great consequence in the family, and as she thought of her heavily-burdened mother, of her helpless sister, and of the three babies at home, she could not refuse to go. Afterwards when we knew all this, and asked her why she was not more afraid to come all that way, alone, she said: "When I passed out of sight of the houses, I used first of all to say 'Our Father,' *and after that I used to sing all the rest of the way,* so as not to be frightened. And when I thought I saw the idiot, at a distance, I turned into the woods, and walked for a long way out of sight of the road." However, after a few days Armida confided the whole story to Lena, who told us; and then, of course, we did not allow her to be frightened any more. We appealed to the priest of Pian Sinatico, who is an excellent man, and a friend of ours, and he said that the idiot really was dangerous, and should not be allowed to wander about the roads alone. He obliged the creature's family to keep him in confinement, threatening to appeal to the law if they did not; and so the roads became safe again, and Armida brought her strawberries to Pian Sinatico all the summer in peace.

On the very last day of our stay there, instead of Armida, Irene came herself, saying that she had come to thank us. I asked her, with some natural curiosity, what she had to thank us for, to which she replied, "For sending me my dinner every day." And then we compared notes, and it all came out, that Armida's preference for eating her dinner in the open air only meant that she wanted to take it to her mother, and foreseeing that her mother might have a natural objection to taking the bread out of her child's mouth, she told her that we sent it to her, and that she herself had dined at Pian Sinatico; and so she had, poor child, but only on a glass of milk, which she drank because she could not carry it away.

(*a*) I don't understand, quite:—does it mean that surely the fathers who leave their children desolate must be made, in the other world, to feel desolate themselves; and that Lena prays for them also? [J. R.]

THE STORY OF MARIA AND METILDE SEGHI (*b*)

I BELIEVE the next face in the book which deserves an account is that of Metilde Seghi—the little widow, we call her—on page 63.[1] As one may see from the picture (which is just like her), she is not beautiful, and yet there are few faces which I like so well to look at. She is naturally dark, and has been burnt by the sun as brown as any Indian, and she is of very diminutive size, though her step is vigorous, and her figure pretty and graceful. But her great charm is in her voice, which is so soft and sweet and full of expression, that I hardly ever heard another like it. But I am beginning this story in the middle; before I tell about Metilde I must tell a little about her family.

Somewhere a long way back, toward the beginning of the century, I do not know in what year, the Seghi family settled in a little hollow on the side of Libro Aperto,[2] called from its shape, "Bicchiere." It is a very beautiful place, just a little way above the rocky bed of the Lima, but it is very wild and solitary; and in those days it was an absolute desert. There Metilde's grandfather built the house where some of his children still live; and planted the inevitable cherry trees about it (cherries are the only trees that will grow at that height; the only fruit trees, I mean), and laid out a fine farm, which still belongs to the family. He had several children, and as they grew up and married, they settled near

(*b*) I give this story with Armida's, that Maria, and she, and Lucy Gray,[3] may be remembered together among mountain children: singing each their song, solitary now no more, in heaven. [J. R.]

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[1] [In Miss Alexander's numbering of the original book; leaf 73 in the synopsis (above, p. 46). The drawing (not given by Ruskin) illustrates the song "Colomba bianca vestita di nero" (White dove in black attire), added below, p. 238 (No. viii.).]

[2] [Two and a half hours above l'Abetone.]

[3] [The reference is to Wordsworth's poem "Lucy Gray, or Solitude," which ends:—

"Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind;
Or sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind."

For other references to the poem, see Vol. IV. p. 393, Vol. XVI. p. 459, and Vol. XXV. p. 285.]

him, so now there is quite a little colony there. I knew this old patriarch when he was ninety-three, a fine-looking, active man, with a fresh colour, whose principal grievance was that his children objected to his dancing, which was his favourite amusement. He died, almost without any illness, at ninety-seven. Beatrice used to tell me a story about this family, which I will repeat, because it gave me such an idea of the desolate state of the country in those days. This old Seghi had among his children one daughter, Maria, who, though a very pretty girl, never had the use of her reason, and could not be taught to speak intelligibly. But she could sing, and used to sing almost all the time, in a most beautiful voice. Nearly all the Seghi family were either poets or singers,—one meets with such families now and then, in the Apennines. And she was strong, and had learned to work, with the others. Every evening, toward sunset, she used to carry the pitcher to the spring, some little way off from the house, and bring it back full, for her mother to make the polenta, and she always went and came singing all the way.

Now one year, at the beginning of winter, the family thought it best to move to another house which belonged to them, near Melo, toward Cutigliano, where they would not be quite so much cut off from all the rest of the world. On the afternoon after their arrival in the new house, Maria took her pitcher and went for water as usual. Nobody took any notice of her; the family were busy, and she was a quiet, harmless creature, who had learned to fulfil her few duties without assistance or direction from any one. But some of them remembered afterwards that they had seen her go, and heard her singing as she walked away from the door. It was the last time: poor Maria's singing was never heard again by any one in this world. When, some time later, they missed her and began to look for her, she was nowhere to be found, and though they sought for her in great distress—for her parents loved her as parents always love unfortunate children—the search was useless, in those interminable woods. And that night the snow began to fall. When the spring came and the snow first melted, some hunters, going through the woods, found a young girl sleeping under a fir tree, with a copper pitcher by her side. They went up to her, and recognized poor Maria Seghi, dead, no doubt, in that first snowstorm, but still quite unchanged in appearance, and looking as if she had just dropped asleep.

This is all Beatrice knew, and I repeat it as she told me: of course I could never speak to any of the poor girl's brothers about it. I know other people about Abetone who have those sad stories in their families, but they do not like to talk about them. The first time I ever saw Metilde was on her wedding day, when all the family and relations walked up to l'Abetone in procession (there being no church, or priest, at Bicchiere), with Tolini, the violin player from Cutigliano, and his son, playing a lively tune at their head. After the wedding there was a dance, and Domenico Seghi, her father, though an old man, outshone every one else as a dancer, and went through the most extraordinary performances, spinning about sometimes on one foot and sometimes on the other, sometimes stooping until his knees almost touched the ground, and spinning about in that position. He would dance with no one but his wife, because, he said, he should not like to make her jealous. This occasioned a good

deal of laughter, Mamma Seghi being a very retiring, placid little old lady, whom one could hardly imagine in a fit of jealousy. I suppose his real reason for selecting her for a partner was that she could dance about as well as he could, only in a quieter style; her feet moving very rapidly in time to the music, while her erect little figure hardly swayed at all, but seemed to be carried about the room as if on wheels, and I think she could almost have carried a glass of water on her head without spilling any. I can remember still how, gradually, all became excited in the dance, how the men took off their jackets, and the women untied their handkerchiefs and turned the ends over their heads, and all made serious work of it: and the dancing over, there was some singing, and Pellegrino, Metilde's brother, the first singer in the country, sang some verses of the giostra[1] of Santa Filomena in a very grand voice like an organ, and then little Metilde joined in and sang with him, and then some of the others. At last they all marched off in procession again, with the two violins at their head, and friends firing salutes from the houses along the way. Metilde was in extreme delight and excitement over the music and dancing, and never remembered to "look modest" after the usual fashion of contadina brides, and to keep her eyes fixed on the ground, but walked along gaily beside her tall, good-looking husband, looking like a child being taken to a festa. Poor girl, she was not much more than a child after all, only seventeen then, looking two or three years younger, a sensitive, excitable little creature,—like all the Seghi, and with a very dependent and affectionate nature. Her festa did not last long; everything promised well at first; a kind husband, a beautiful farm close to her father's, and her relations all about her. And they were a very united family. But troubles soon began; four children were born, one after another, and they all died before they reached the age of two years. Both she and her husband mourned bitterly for their little ones, and could never forget them. Metilde seemed to find some comfort in talking about them, and in shedding many tears; but her husband, Pellegrino—he had the same Christian name as her brother, the singer—seldom spoke of his troubles; instead, he grew thin and quiet, and very compassionate of the troubles of others. He treated his wife, especially, with great gentleness and tenderness, and seemed always to be trying to console her, by his kindness, for the loss of the children. Then a fifth child came, a most beautiful little boy this time; they called him Adamo. When he was a few months old he was taken ill like the others, and they thought he was going to die. We heard of it—we were at l'Abetone at the time—and we sent him a very simple medicine, which, by the blessing of Providence, arriving just at the right minute, saved his life. And this was the beginning of a very strong and lasting attachment, on the part of Metilde and Pellegrino, to us. They used to supply us with milk from their farm, for by that time we had gone to housekeeping: and to bring it they were obliged to descend a steep path from Bicchiere to the Lima, and then cross the noisy, foaming little river on some stepping stones, and then ascend another *very* steep path, among broken rocks and tangled bushes, to the main road. Sometimes, when it had rained much, the stepping

[1] [See below, p. 209.]

stones were covered, and then Pellegrino—who used to bring the milk whenever the weather was bad, or Metilde was tired—had to go more than a mile up the river, to find another crossing place, and sometimes, when it was very stormy, the river was quite impassable, and so we had no milk at all.

In the year when Adamo was two years old, when the time came for us to go back to Florence, I remember that Pellegrino seemed unusually sorry to part from us. As he parted, he said: "I hope we shall meet in the spring; but if not, I hope we shall meet in Heaven." I can almost see now his sad, kind, pale face, and hear the voice in which he said those words. His quiet grief for his children, his patience, and his gentleness with others, had given him an air of refinement which his rough hands and contadino clothes could in no way lessen, and I often used to address him as "Signore," without knowing it, until his faint smile of amusement would remind me that he was not what is usually called a gentleman, though he appeared to have all the best qualities of one. We never saw him again: the next winter, when the snow was deep, he was taken ill with an attack on the chest, which at first seemed to be slight, so that no one made any account of it. But one night, when there was a terrible snowstorm, he was taken worse, and both he and Metilde saw that the end was at hand. Neither priest nor doctor could be sent for, or could have come, through the snow. Metilde could not have gone even to her father's house, though that was not far off. Then Pellegrino said to her: "Metilde, I think I could say the prayers for the dying, if you would help me." And the poor little woman, in the half-buried house, had courage given her to kneel by the bed of the man who had been, one might say, husband and father both to her, and to say the prayers, which she knew by heart, he repeating the words after her. Then he spoke a few words of farewell to his wife, saying: "Take good care of Adamo, and keep my watch for him." And finally, as the last moment came, he said, "Lord Jesus, forgive my sins, and teach me the way to come to Thee." And with that he passed away, and Metilde was left alone with the child. All this she told me, as well as she could tell it between her sobs, when we met in the spring. Everybody wondered what the little widow would do, and of course she had plenty of advice, and some thought she had better let the farm and go home to her parents, and others advised a second marriage: but to every one's surprise, the helpless little creature, as everybody called her, kept on with the farm all by herself, only hiring a little boy to go after the cows, and her father and brothers, of course, lending an occasional helping hand. Adamo is growing into a large boy, and will soon be able to make himself useful, and everybody likes Metilde, and would like to befriend her.

POSTSCRIPT

TO THE STORY OF METILDE SEGHI

WHILE, as I have already said,[1] I contentedly and reverently leave these sketches of the Italian peasantry to produce their own impression on the reader's mind, unwarped by comment of mine, I yet think it well to note in passing any chance bearing of them which might else escape his notice. It seems to me that this beautiful last scene of Pellegrino's life, and Metilde's love, should teach us all the value and power of the forms of prayer which are indeed composed so as to express with sufficiency, and follow with true sympathy, the emotions, scarcely to themselves always intelligible, of sincere and simple Christian minds, in the states when they most need, and may be least able, to pray. All that has ever been alleged against *forms* of worship, is justly said only of those which are compiled without sense, and employed without sincerity. The earlier services of the Catholic Church teach men to think, as well as pray; nor did ever a soul in its immediate distress or desolation, find the forms of petition learnt in childhood, lifeless on the lips of age.[2]

[1] [See above, pp. 109, 118–119.]

[2] [Compare an incident told by Ruskin in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 94 (Vol. XXIX. p. 488).]

Rispetti

Take courage love, and if it must so be,
Thanks but take no sorrow in thy heart
For if I knew it it would trouble me.
To think in sadness I had seen thee part
Gnose not that ye and seen return again:
And leave the sadness me who must remain.

Stateui allegro, amor: se ve ne andate.
Non vi pigliate al cor malinconia.
Se lo sapessi, me lo avrei per male,
Che andaste mal contento per la via
Andate pure e ritornate presto:
Lasciate sospirare a me che resto.

LETTER FROM ANGELO TO ROSINA

I INTENDED to give in this place, for illustration of the Lovers' Parting,[1] a real letter, written in verse, by Angelo the son of Beatrice, from his winter's working-place in the Maremma, to Rosina of Melo;[2]—but on reading it carefully, I find it scarcely in harmony with the rest of the poetry in the book, being indeed a letter, not a song, and though gracefully versified, little otherwise different from love-letters written far north of Tuscany. So, instead, I give the chanted letter of an unknown Angelo to an unknown Rosina—one of the few pensive songs in the book, "Sarai Contenta."

RISPETTI

"The English translation of these two beautiful rispetti,"[3] says Miss Alexander, "is a little shorter than the original, because I have omitted the repetition of the last lines, which is beautiful and characteristic in the Italian, but in English it is not so easy always to say the same thing in two different ways, and make both sound natural."

In this case, I should have, perhaps, myself preferred a simple translation in prose. I want to know, for one thing, what Francesca does not explain, whether the "little bell with the low voice" was one of the four, or a fifth, feebler.

As for the saying of the maid to her lover[4] in the "Parting," one ought to learn Italian merely to read it.

[1] [Ruskin so entitles Plate XI.]

[2] [The Letter is on leaves 106 and 107 of the original MS. book (see synopsis, p. 46). Miss Alexander's note upon the Letter is this:—

> "This letter was written, more than twenty years ago, by Angelo Bernardi, son of Beatrice di Pian degli Ontani, who himself gave me a copy of it. Such rhymed letters are very often written, by the young men who pass the winter in the Maremma, to the girls in the mountains. Angelo is one of the best poets in that part of the country. By Saint John's day all the workmen of the Maremma expect to be at home."

The letter concludes with the line, "Addio! A rivederci a San Giovanni."

[3] [The first two of the three given on the following pages: they are Nos. 22 and 1160 in Tigri's collection. The third is No. 43.]

[4] [That is, the song beneath the drawing (Plate XI.).]

QUANTI CE N'È

Quanti ce n'è che mi senton cantare,
Diran: Buon per colei ch' ha il cuor contento!
S'io canto, canto per non dir del male;
Canto, per iscialar quel c'ho qua drento:
Canto per iscialar mi' afflitta doglia;
Sebbene io canto, di piangere ho voglia:
Canto per iscialar mi' afflitta pena;
Sebbene io canto, di dolor son piena.

SARAI CONTENTA

Morirò, morirò, sarai contenta!
Più non la sentirai mi' afflitta voce:
Quattro campane sentirai suonare,
Una piccola campana a bassa voce:
Quando lo sentirai il morto passare,
Fatti di fuora, che quello son io:
Ti prego, bella, viemmi a accompagnare
Fino alla chiesa, per l'amor di Dio!
Quando m'incontri, fallo il pianto amaro;
Ricordati di me, quando t'amavo.
Quando m'incontri, vogli i passi indietro;
Ricordati di me quand'ero teco.

IL GELSUMINO ALLA FINESTRA

La casa del mio amor sta in un bel piano,
Rimpetto alla mia par un giardino.
Appiè dell' uscio c'è un bel melagrano
Alla finestra ci ha un gelsumino.
Piglia quel gelsumin, mettilo al fresco;
Canta pur su, che ti rispondo a questo.
Piglia quel gelsumin, mettilo al sole;
Canta pur su, che ti rispondo, amore.

There on the plain a little
house I see.
And in that house my lady lives herself;
Beside the door a green pomegranite tree,
A jessamine blooming on the window shelf.
Come love and set thy jessamine in the air.
Sing, I can hear thee at thy window there.
Come love and set thy jessamine in the sun
Sing, I will answer when the song is done.

La casa del mio amor sta in un
bel piano,
Rimpetto alla mia par un giardino
Appiè dell'uscio c'è un bel melagrano
Alla finestra ci ha un gelsumino
Piglia quel gelsumin, mettilo al fresco;
Canta pur su, che ti rispondo a questo.
Piglia quel gelsumin, mettilo al sole;
Canta pur su, che ti rispondo amore.

HOW MANY COME

How many come and listen to my songs,
Then say, 'Tis well he has a heart so gay!
I'd rather sing than talk of all my wrongs,
I sing to let my hidden grief have way.
My heart is full, I cannot silent keep,
But while I sing I'd often rather weep.

THOU WILT BE CONTENT

I'm dying, dying; thou wilt be content,
For my sad voice will weary thee no more.
Thou'lt hear instead the bells with their lament,
High in the tower sounding, all the four.
When past thy door the dead is borne away,
Come out and look, for I am he they bear:
This only, dearest, for God's love I pray,
Come with me to the church, then leave me there.
Come with me to the church, and shed some tears;
Remember I have loved thee many years.

THE JESSAMINE WINDOW

There on the plain a little house I see,
And in that house my lady lives herself;
Beside the door a green pomegranate tree,
A jessamine blooming on the window shelf.
Come, love, and set thy jessamine in the air:
Sing, I can hear thee at thy window there.
Come, love, and set thy jessamine in the sun,
Sing, I will answer when the song is done.

THE STORY OF GIGIA

Now I come to the Madonna and the Gipsy.[1] Of the Madonna I have already told,[2]—of St. Joseph I know little; he was a contadino, and hired a farm at Bellosguardo for a year or two, then went away. I believe he was a very good man, but he was so extremely deaf that I could not make much acquaintance with him. But I ought to say that the Bambino (in the picture[3] where the Madonna is riding on the donkey) is poor Giulia's child—Giulia, that was my Ida's sister.[4]

About the Gipsy I have much more to say. She is Gigia Zanni, of Fonte alla Vaccaja, near l'Abetone, and she is said to be really of gipsy descent, though she would probably not thank me for saying it. There is a little village about two miles past l'Abetone, called Faidello, said to have been settled in old times by the gipsies, where some of the people have a very peculiar style of beauty, and others an equally peculiar and excessive ugliness. Almost all of them have deep, dreamy-looking black eyes, wavy hair, soft voices, and much grace of movement and manner: they have a slow, half-singing manner of speaking; they are usually of rather a slight figure, and consumption is much too prevalent among the young people. Now I think of it, the picture on the first page of the preface to the *Roadside Songs*[5] represents the country where Faidello lies; and the road, which I at least can trace out for some way, leads through it, though the village itself is out of sight behind the hill-side. The family of Gigia's mother came, I believe, from Faidello, and she has all the peculiar characteristics of the race. Her husband, Cosimetto, is, like many of the mountain people, a musician without knowing music. He plays very sweetly on the violin, though only by ear, and is generally present at all the weddings, dances, and giostre. If any one asks Gigia how many children she has, she says, eight; if one goes on to ask where they are, she answers, with a wave of her hand upward, "Two are with the Lord Jesus, and one has gone to service; the others are with me." A mountain woman never says that she has *lost* a child, and always counts her dead and her living together. But what I wanted to tell about Gigia was her charity to a poor boy, a great many years ago. It was when we first began to go to l'Abetone, and no other strangers went there then, and it was a wild, primitive place enough. One could hardly even call it a village. A little country church, the priest's house, the small tavern, a great barn built to receive the hay from the government

[1] [See Plates XIII., XIV., and XV.]
[2] [See above, p. 110.]
[3] [Not given by Ruskin. Leaf 15 in the synopsis of the original MS. book (above, p. 45).]
[4] [See *The Story of Ida*; above, p. 9.]
[5] [Leaf 3 in the synopsis (p. 45).]

fields, (for l'Abetone is part of the royal possessions,) and the old custom-house, no longer used since Tuscany and Modena ceased to be separate states; all built in a plain massive style, with small square windows cased in heavy, roughly-cut stone, and all built on a slope so steep, that every house was a storey higher on one side than on the other. A little farther down the road, across a bridge, was one more small house, and that was all: no other roof in sight, though we had a wide prospect enough of fir woods, and desolate, though beautiful, mountain tops.

In the old custom-house lived two or three families, Gigia and her little flock on the ground floor. We ourselves occupied all the available rooms in the tavern excepting one, which was kept for the use of any chance traveller. One summer day a waggon stopped under the shadow of the great barn across the road, and two men lifted out a boy and laid him on the stone pavement. Every one went out to look at him, and a very sad sight he was. He appeared to be about eleven or twelve years old, a handsome boy, but deadly pale, and seemed hardly alive. His father, standing beside him (one knew he was the father by the distress in his face), was nearly as pale as the child: he was a careworn, very poor-looking man. We asked what ailed the poor child. He had been helping his father and some other men to make a road, somewhere in the Modenese country, and a great piece of rock had fallen on him, as they were working under the side of a steep hill, crushing him fearfully. He seemed little likely to live, but had entreated to be taken to Cirelio, near Pistoja, where his home was, that he might be with his mother; and they were trying to take him there, but he suffered too much with the motion of the waggon, and they had been obliged to stop. We wanted to have him brought into the house and laid on a bed; but the tavern keeper and his wife (though really kind-hearted people) would not consent, because they feared lest he should die on their hands. Then we applied to the two or three neighbours, but every one refused, although of course we offered to pay them. Nobody would have a child in that condition in his house. While we were standing there, wondering what we should do, Gigia came out of her door to see what was going on, and as soon as she saw what the trouble was, she said, without hesitation, and without waiting to be asked, "Bring him into my house." It was more trouble, perhaps, for her, than it would have been for any one else present, for she had a young baby at the time, and her husband was away; and the boy really looked as though he were dying, though, I suppose now, he was only faint with pain. As soon as he was in Gigia's house, and had rested a little, he seemed to feel better, and when somebody had given him a peach, and somebody else a cup of coffee, he seemed a good deal better. And a few hours later he was feeling so very much better that he wanted to go on again toward his home. A barocciaio who lived opposite had just come home then from his day's work, and when he heard about the poor boy, and of his wish to go home as soon as possible to Cirelio (which is about twenty miles from l'Abetone), he undertook to carry him there without farther delay. So, only waiting long enough to feed his mule and give him a short rest, he harnessed him again into the cart, and made a bed of straw for the poor child to lie on, and helped lift him in, and covered him over with his jacket. Every one in the little

settlement had turned out into the road to see the departure; Gigia with tearful eyes, very helpful and very motherly, quite sorry, as it seemed to me, to part from her poor little charge. They passed away, down the road, and were out of sight in a few minutes, the tired barocciaio walking at the head of his tired mule, the boy's father beside the cart: the boy himself looking back at us just once with a smile before we lost sight of him, and then settling down on the straw, and drawing his jacket over his head. We heard afterwards that he recovered. The name of the barocciaio was Francesco Rossini: he died several years ago, and I hope that his kindness to that child was laid to his account on the other side.

THE STORY OF FORTUNATO

As long ago as I can remember anything at all about l'Abetone, in the days when it was a very primitive place indeed, and a great deal prettier and better, I think, than it is now, there was a certain old woman with a donkey and cart, whose appearance in the little settlement was as much a regular part of Sunday as the ringing of the church bell. Garibaldi was the name of the donkey; and, as the Abetone people always appear to have a conscientious scruple about calling any one by his or her real name, the old woman was generally called Garibaldi too; it was not until long afterwards that I came to know that her name was Assunta. She was a rough, weather-beaten, sunburnt woman, with a strong step and a loud voice; neat, but very coarse in her dress, scrupulously honest, it seemed to me, in her dealings, but not very gentle or patient if people tried to cheat her, with hard features and keen gray eyes, which, however, broke out easily into a smile. She used to sell fruit and garden produce of all sorts, and supplied all the scattered houses along the road for many miles. I never took much notice of her until one day in the early summer, when I had joined the group that always gathered about her cart. She was busy bargaining, and weighing out potatoes and string-beans for some of the women, when those keen eyes of hers caught sight of a little child in its mother's arms, reaching out its hands towards a basket of very bright-coloured cherries, and the mother snatching it away. Instantly she put a bunch of cherries into the little hands, saying, "Take them, you pretty little dear!" with such a sudden and unexpected sweetness in her face and voice that I was startled, and felt that I had never known anything about her, and that she was really something a great deal more than just a rough woman with a vegetable cart.

After this I used to begin talking to her sometimes; but she was usually in a hurry, and too busy to spare time for many words. But for several years I used to see her and the donkey, always unchanged; until at last the time came when, for reasons which it would take too long to tell, and which have nothing to do with this story, we ourselves were absent for five or six years from l'Abetone. When we returned it was to find great changes, and none of them, to my mind, for the better; the beautiful remote place gradually becoming known, and growing into a fashionable summer resort; new hotels in process of building; the grand

old forest, which gives the district its name of Boscolungo, being slowly cut away, the people poorer and more discouraged. And when Sunday came the old woman and the cart were missing. I asked for them often but for a long time could find out nothing about them. I knew that Assunta lived at Cutigliano, seven miles down the road, and, as I may as well say here, one of the prettiest, most unspoiled old towns in the country; on a steep mountain slope overhanging the Lima, with its church, said to have been built by the Countess Matilda (but then every very old country church in Tuscany, not otherwise accounted for, is attributed to that very pious and warlike lady[1]), and the group of immense and ancient fir-trees beside it, catching the eye for a long way up and down the road. Cutigliano used to be a Capo-luogo in old Republican times, and has a grand Palazzo del Commune, with inscriptions and coats of arms built into the walls, recalling the various Podestà who once bore rule there; and the people still show with pride one inscription that was placed there by poor Ferrucci[2] only a little while before he lost his life at Cavinana, not far away.

However, I am not writing a history of Cutigliano, but of Assunta, who lived in one of its steep narrow streets, just flights of low steps, but with beautiful gardens between the old houses, and roses and jessamines hanging over their walls. At last a friend of Pian Sinatico, only three miles from Cutigliano, undertook to find her for me; and one day the poor woman, hearing that I had been asking for her, made her appearance at our door. She was so changed that for a moment I did not know her; her tall figure bent and wasted, her face pale, thin, and sunken, her dress in rags, her hair quite gray. She was not inclined to complain; Assunta always seemed to me like one who had received little kindness in the world, and expected less, and the last thing she looked for was sympathy. But it did not require any explanation, not even two looks, to see what the immediate matter was with her, and Lena set a good meal on the table before her without waiting for a word from either of us. When she had eaten, which she did like one half-starved, as I am afraid she was, she told me in few words, and in answer to my questions, her story. There was a great deal more that she did not tell me then, and which I will tell in its place; for I am telling this story unconnectedly, a little at a time, just as, in the course of years, it became known to me.

But what I then learned from her was, that in the past winter, which had been a very severe one, she had been ill, so ill that she had never expected to recover, with no one to take care of her; and when at last her great natural strength conquered and she became able to leave her room, it was only to find her poor donkey dead. What seemed most to weigh upon her mind was the thought that her donkey had been neglected, perhaps starved, in the time when she was too feeble to attend to him. With her donkey her means of earning a support had gone; she could hardly, at her age, learn a new trade, she never seems to have thought of begging, and she had fallen into the lowest depths of want. However,

[1] [For whom, see Vol. V. p. 277, and Vol. XXIII. p. 20.]

[2] [Francesco Ferrucci (1489–1530), the last champion of Florentine liberty, killed at Cavinana while setting out on an attempt to prevent Florence falling into the hands of the Medici. His Life, by Filippo Sassetti, is in *Archivio Storico Italiano*, tom. iv. part ii. pp. 423–535.]

it is always darkest before daylight, and as Assunta's sad story became known, some of the summer visitors at l'Abetone became interested in her; and one of them concluded to buy her a new donkey, and start her in business once again. Assunta was consulted on the subject, and was finally told to take her time, and select an animal to suit herself. There were two candidates offered: one, a very pretty, gentle, black donkey, in good condition, which everybody strongly recommended her to take; the other a gray one, ugly and vicious, and not much better than a skeleton, scarred and bruised, with his ribs standing out conspicuously. But Assunta, after a few days' trial, chose the ugly one, and having once made up her mind, stuck to it. She chose him, as she told me in confidence, because she wanted to take him away from his owner, who starved and beat him, and she was sure that, if he were kindly treated, he would be a very fine animal indeed. It was a great day when Assunta came to l'Abetone to take possession of the poor creature. Another friend had given her a new dress, and all the neighbours were much interested and excited on her account. I remember still how Peppa Lorenzini, the mistress of the house where we ourselves live, not being quite satisfied with the old woman's appearance, took off the handkerchief which she herself wore, and tied it carefully on Assunta's head, smoothing gently the gray hair underneath it. And so she was once again set upon her feet, and, before long, the wild haggard look passed away from her face, and though she never grew so stout and strong as she had been before, she was a pretty, happy-looking old woman. She no longer came up with her vegetable cart every Sunday, though she still occasionally did so. She had meant at first to take up her old manner of life, that is, to go once a week to Pistoia, lay in a supply of fruit and vegetables, and then retail them through the country. But she found, on going to Pistoia, that garden produce, like everything else, had increased much in price. And worse than this, a woman who, in old times, had allowed her for friendship to sleep in her house, and put her donkey in the stable, was dead. So Assunta had to pay for a lodging, which ate up a great deal too much of her small profits. She found at last that the most profitable thing for her to do was to go out working by the day, with the donkey, carrying loads of stone or sand for builders, or hay or wood for those who wanted it. In this way she contrived to earn a living. Whenever she came to l'Abetone on any business, as often happened, she had a standing invitation to eat at our house; but she never would eat until she had unharnessed the donkey and fed him, and found a comfortable place for him to wait in the shade.

And now it is time, before I go any farther with my story, that I should tell a little more about the donkey. His name was Fortunato. Assunta had consulted me about his name, and I had proposed calling him Garibaldi, in memory of the old one. But Assunta had thought best not. "I had trouble once," she said, "about the old donkey's name; the guards arrested me, because they said it was not decent for me to be calling out Garibaldi all over the country after a donkey. They had me up before the tribunal; but I told them the truth about it, that Garibaldi was his name before I had him, and that he would not answer to any other; and they just laughed and let me go." I am sorry to say that

Assunta's care and kindness did not work so thorough a reform in the character of Fortunato as she had anticipated. His personal appearance certainly changed a good deal for the better, the scars and bruises healed over, and the ribs became less conspicuous. But his temper had been thoroughly embittered, and he would sometimes bite savagely. Once he bit her; but she bore it with great good humour, saying to me, with a smile, that donkeys that were good for anything always did bite. Indeed, she soon became so fond of her poor companion, that any allusion to his faults appeared to hurt her feelings, as if he had been a dear friend, and she was always ready with some excuse for him. And, to do him justice, Fortunato certainly had his good qualities. Like many ill-tempered people, he was capable of strong affection, and finally attached himself profoundly to his mistress. She told me once how, when we were leaving l'Abetone, she came down from Cutigliano and waited by the roadside to take leave of us as we passed; but we were looking out for Polissena,[1] who lived on the opposite side of the road, and did not see Assunta; and when she made a sign to the driver to stop, he, thinking probably that she was a beggar, took no notice of her, but drove on. The poor woman was so distressed at this that she cried all day, and Fortunato was so affected at the sight of her distress, that he all day would eat nothing. He was very willing to work, and became, under her care, quite strong and active. She said to me once that he went up hills *like a swallow;* then, apparently not satisfied with this comparison, she said, looking in my face, "Did you ever see lightning?" I replied that I had done so. "Well, then," said Assunta, "*that* is what he goes like!" One sharp winter's day in Florence who should make her appearance at my door but Assunta! I forget now what particular affair of buying or selling had brought her to within a few miles of the city, and she had thought well to spare an hour or two to make us a little visit. So we made her welcome, and when she had eaten and was rested, as she sat opposite to the fire and talked with us, she told us, little by little, much of the history of her life. And it was a strange one! I remember so well that day, though it is far away now. Paolina was with me that day, and the little Madonnina; and I shall never forget the look of wondering pity in Paolina's beautiful eyes, and the trembling of her lips, and how her colour went and came as she listened; while the dark-eyed, golden-haired Madonnina, though deeply interested, kept herself quite composed, and could hardly help smiling sometimes at some of the old woman's odd expressions; and Edwige, sitting by with her knitting, was kind and sympathizing, but not wondering, for, to her, suffering and want, and help sent in the last extremity, were not things to wonder at; she had proved them all! Assunta could only just remember her mother, and the principal thing that she could remember about her was of having seen her shed many tears. Her father was, as she made no scruple of saying, a bad man; he used to beat both her mother and herself, and she thought that her mother's early death was owing to his ill-treatment. Her next recollection was of a step-mother —a hard, violent woman, who used to abuse her, even more than her father had ever done. So at fourteen, finding herself quite miserable in her own family, she left home and went to service. She secured a place

[1] [See *Christ's Folk in the Apennine;* below, p. 259.]

at Pistoia as attendant to a young invalid girl, confined for life to her bed with a hopeless spinal complaint. This period of service (and it was a long one) was the happiest time in Assunta's hard life, and she seemed to look back on the quiet chamber where she for many years waited on her gentle, helpless lady, as on an earthly Paradise. She was, if I remember rightly, thirty when her dear mistress died, leaving her almost broken-hearted. "I could not bear then," she said, "to put another mistress in my lady's place, and so I went back to my father's house at Cutigliano. My step-mother was dead, and my father had married a third wife, a young woman, younger than myself. Poor Cele (her name was Celestine, but we always called her Cele), she was not very happy! My father was not good to her, and she was often in tears as my own mother had been. But she and I always loved each other; and when she died, which was before very long, she made me promise that I would be good to her two little children. So when my father died, soon afterwards, I would not go to service again, that I might not leave the children; but I bought a donkey and cart, and went selling vegetables about the country. I was young and strong then, and might have been laying up something for old age, but it took all my earnings to support my little brother and sister. I was resolved to give them the best education I could, for nobody had ever taken the trouble to give me any instruction, and I had felt the want of it sadly. So I sent them to school, and they learned to read and write and cast up accounts, and when they grew up they both had fortune. My sister married a fattore, and she keeps all his accounts, and they are quite prosperous people; and my brother oversees some of the people who load wood, and makes a good deal of money." When Assunta came to this part of her story, I asked her how it was that her sister and brother had allowed her to become so poor. She answered sadly, but resignedly: "After they grew up they never took much notice of me. I went to see my sister, the one who married the fattore, and she received me kindly and gave me to eat; but I did not suppose that her husband would want me to keep coming. I never blamed my sister if she did not help me; I always thought she would have done so if she could; but a married woman must do what her husband pleases; but I did feel it hard that my brother should desert me so entirely. But when things looked the darkest for me, something very wonderful happened to me. It was after my donkey died, and I had been selling, little by little, everything that I had, just to live. But I could not pay my rent, and one day the woman of whom I hired my room, told me that she could not wait any longer, and I must go. Then my heart failed indeed, as I thought of being turned into the street in my old age! That night I could not go to bed, I was too unhappy; I sat down on a chair by the bedside, like this,"—and Assunta buried her face in her hands—"and I must have been sitting so for a long time; I do not know whether I was asleep or awake—when all at once I heard somebody say, 'Assunta!' And I looked up, and there, close by me, stood my young step-mother, Cele. 'Oh, Cele!' I said, 'tell me about yourself!—tell me if you are happy!' And she answered, 'I am happy and well, but tell me how *you* are, poor woman.' And I dropped my head on my bosom, and answered, 'Male, male!' Then Cele said, 'I know all about it, and what you have

done for my children, and it has been a great sorrow to me that they have so forgotten you. But if they have forgotten your kindness, I never have. I have been praying so much for you! And at last, to-night, I have been sent to tell you that the worst of your trouble is over: in a little while now help will be sent to you!' And with those words she left me. But will you believe it? Only the next day I received a present of the most beautiful donkey that ever I saw!" Here Assunta branched out into a long, eloquent, and rather poetical description of the beauty and virtues of Fortunato, and finally ended by saying, "There have been evenings when I have gone to bed without my supper, but *he* never has."

I have not much more to tell about Assunta: for two or three years she used to appear now and then, as in the old times, at l'Abetone. One day I particularly remember, when she came on foot, in a great hurry, bringing a magnificent stalk of white Annunciation lilies. She had been working at Melo, about seven miles away, on the other side of the Lima, and having seen this lily growing in a garden, had asked for it, and thought, as she said, that she "would just run over and bring it to us."

The next spring after that, when we returned to l'Abetone, Assunta came no more. I asked for her; she was gone—gone to her young mistress, and Cele, I hope, where her affectionate heart will have something better to love than a donkey. I have often asked, but have never been able to find out, what became of Fortunato.

No,—nor of the wild ass-colt, who is born, like to man;[1] —nor of the wild bird, that is in heaven, and knows it not;—nor of all the souls capable of love, that never have loved;—nor of the loving souls that have been, and are not. Assunta's dream, if it should be called a dream, is one of the very few instances found in these peasant biographies of any vision seeming to bring intelligence from the other world, or even clue to any far-away event in this; the Italian mountaineer seeming to be destitute of any faculty corresponding to the Scottish second-sight.[2] But Francesca tells me that they give great heed to the character and intimation of natural dreams; and I have myself good reason to think them wise in doing so, with their ancestors.

J. R.

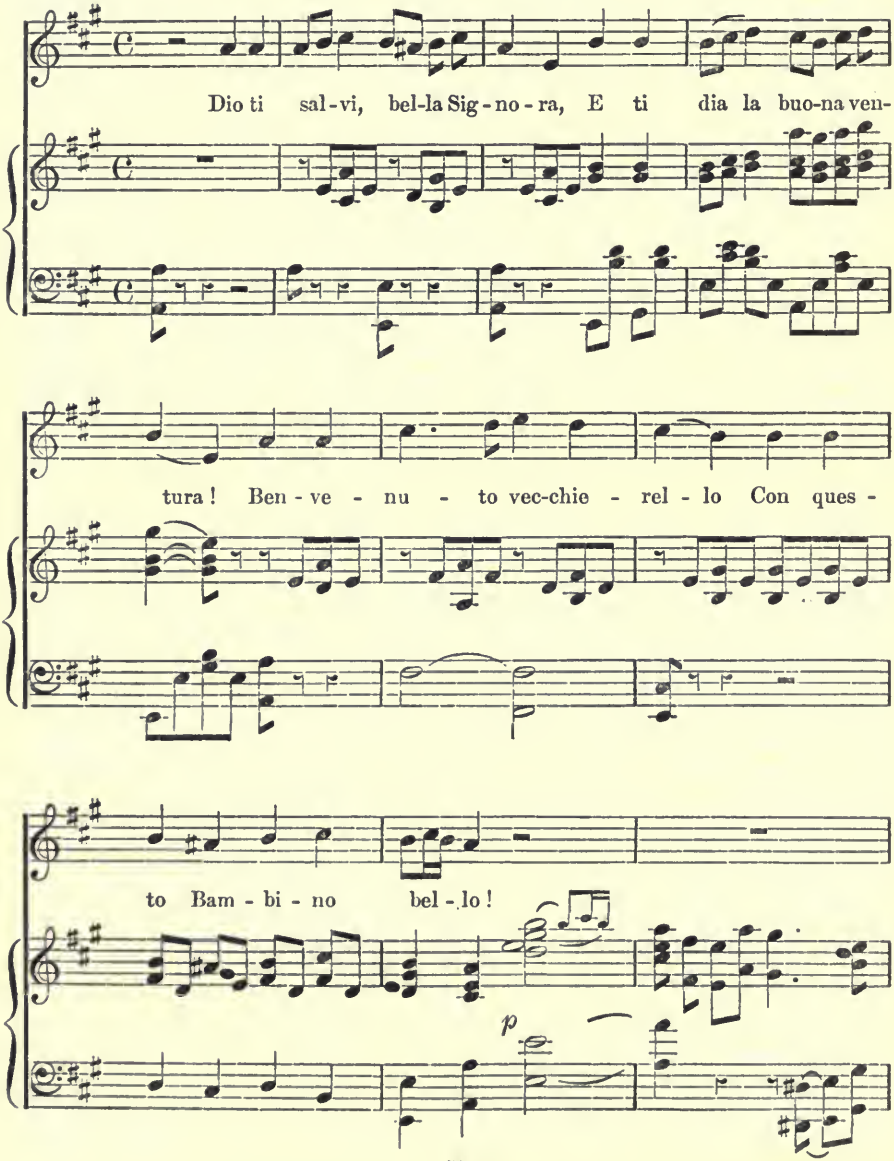
Brantwood, 28*th Dec.*, 1884.

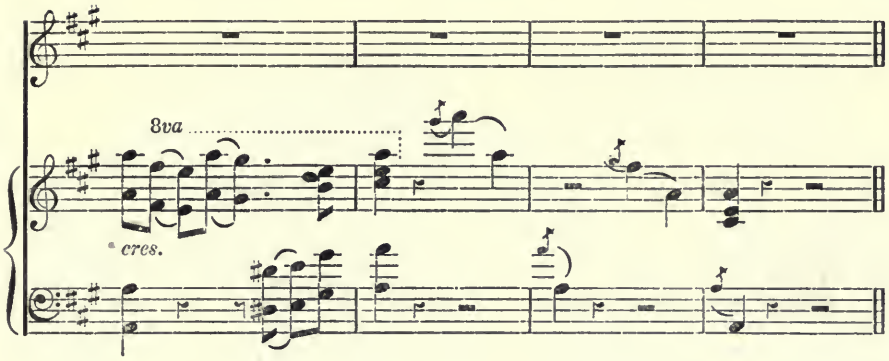
[1] [Job xi. 12.]

[2] [On this subject, see *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 63 and 65 (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 547, 604).]

THE MADONNA AND THE GIPSY

(LA MADONNA E LA ZINGARELLA)





LA MADONNA E LA ZINGARELLA

(THE MADONNA AND THE GIPSY)

Zingarella

Dio ti salvi, bella Signora,
E ti dia buona ventura!
Benvenuto, vecchierello,
Con questo Bambino bello!

Gipsy

God be with thee, Lady dear,
Give thee comfort, give thee cheer!
Welcome, good old man, to thee,
With thy Child so fair to see!

Madonna

Ben trovata, sorella mia!
La sua grazia Dio ti dia!
Ti perdoni i tuoi peccati
L'infinita sua bontade!

Madonna

Sister, in this lonely place
Glad am I to see thy face!
God forgive thee all thy sin,
Plant His grace thy soul within.

Zingarella

Siete stanchi e meschini,
Credo, poveri pellegrini,
Che cercate d'alloggiare;
Vuoi, Signora, scavalcàre?

Gipsy

By your looks I understand
You are strangers in the land,
Seeking shelter for the night:
Lady, wilt thou please alight?

Madonna

Tu che sei sorella mia,
Tutta piena di cortesia.
DIO ti renda la carità
L'infinita sua bontà!

Madonna

Oh my sister! that kind word
Is the first that we have heard!
God reward thee from above,
For thy courtesy and love!

Zingarella

Oh scavalca, Signora mia!
Hai una faccia di una Dia.
Ch'io terrò la creatura
Che sto cuore m'innamora!

Gipsy

Oh alight, dear Lady mine!
Something in thee seems divine!
Let me—for I long to—bear
In my arms thy infant fair!

Madonna

Noi veniamo da Nazaretto,
Semo senza alcun ricetto;
Arrivati alla strania,
Stanchi e lassi dalla via.

Madonna

We have come from Nazareth here,
All the way in haste and feär:
Weary, lost, on foreign ground,
We no shelter yet have found.

Zingarella

Sono donna Zingarella;
Benchè sono poverella,
T'offerisco la casa mia,
Benchè non e cosa per tia.

Gipsy

Though a gipsy poor am I,
Yet to help you I would try:
This my house I offer free,
Though 'tis not a place for thee.[1]

Madonna

Or sia da me DIO lodato,
E da tutti ringraziato!
Sorella, le tue parole
Mi consolano al cuore!

Madonna

God be praisèd without end
For the comfort He doth send!
Sister, kind indeed thou art,
And thy words console my heart.

Zingarella

Se non è come meritate,
Signoruccia, perdonate;
Come posso, io meschina,
Accettar una regina?

Aggio qua una stallicella,
Buona per la somarella;
Paglia e fieno ce ne getto;
Che per tutto lo ricetto.

Gipsy

If 'tis not as you deserve,
Still I hope that it may serve;
How can I, so poor and mean,
Fitly entertain a queen?

Here I have a little shed
Where the donkey can be led:
Straw there is; I'll bring some hay;
All can safely rest till day.

[1] [In the original MS. book, Miss Alexander gives the following note:—
"At l'Abetone I found another version of this ballad, almost entirely different, yet with some of the same lines: apparently some one, having heard the original Zingarella, and remembering a little of it, completed the story from his own invention; in it the gipsy, when inviting the Holy Family to lodge in her house, gives the following rather homely account of what she has to offer:—

"'My house, 'tis true, is poor, and small,
But I have swept and cleaned it all:
There's fruit a plenty, ripe and fine;
I've bread fresh baked and good new wine;
Besides two hens that always lay
An egg, my lady, every day.'

She also shows them a pretty green field, where the donkey can go to pasture."]

Gypsy ...

If it is not as you deserve,
Still I hope that it may serve:
Now can I do poor and mean,
Fitly entertain a queen?

Here I have a little shed,
Where the donkey can be led.
Straw there is, I'll bring some hay;
All can safely rest till Day.

Zingarella ...

Se non è come meritate,
Signoruccia, perdonate!
Come posso io mischina
Accettar una regina?

Aggio qua una stallicella,
Buona per la somarella:
Paglia e fieno ce ne getto,
Che per tutto lo ricetto.

E tu, vecchiarello, siedi,
Sei venuto sempre a piedi.
Avete fatto, o bella figlia,
Trecento, e tante miglia.

Father, thou must weary be;
Thou hast come on foot, I see;
Thou hast walked the country o'er,
Full three hundred miles and more.

Oh ch'è bello sto figliarello,
Che par fatto col pennello!
Non ci so dare assomiglio,
Bella Madre e bello Figlio.

Lovely is this Child to view,
More than artist ever drew!
Nothing with you may compare,
Babe and Mother, both so fair.

E sei stata a Bettelemme—
Signoruccia, ancor teme?
Non avere più paura,
Sei arrivata alla buon ora.

Thou hast now from Bethlehem fled;
Still I see thee pale with dread.
Lady, there's no cause for fear;
Herod cannot reach thee here.

Se ti piace, o gran Signora,
T'indovino la ventura.
Noi, Signora, così fino,
Facciam sempre l'indovino.

Lady, it would please me well
If I might thy fortune tell:
Ever since the days of old,
All my race have fortunes told.

Ma quel che dirò a te,
Tu lo sai meglio di me.
Alla tua bella presenza,
Mostri assai di sapienza.

Yet, with all my art can do,
I may tell thee nothing new;
For in thy sweet face doth shine
Wisdom greater far than mine. . . .

Esco pazza d'allegrezza,
Piena son di contentezza.
Che, da quanto io discerno
Fosti eletta tu ab eterno.

Ah! this joy is all too great!
Scarce my heart can bear the weight.
Wondrous things mine eyes behold...
God hath chosen thee of old!

Fosti sempre da DIO amata,
Pura, santa, immacolata;
Tu sei quella di DIO Madre
Che ha in Cielo suo Padre.

God hath caused thee to endure,
Ever holy, spotless, pure;
And on earth hath granted thee
Mother of the Lord to be.

Anna chiamavasi la tua Madre,
E Gioacchino il tuo Padre.
Ti chiamerò, Signora mia,
Col bel nome di MARIA.

Joachim and Anne his wife,
Were thy parents in this life.
Thee, my Lady, I will call
Mary, sweetest name of all.

E cresciuta ti presentaro,
Ed al tempio ti portaro.
Là mangiavi, là dormivi,
Là insegnavi, là leggevi.

To the Temple did they bear
Thee, a child, and left thee there;
Where thou didst, for many a day,
Eat, and sleep, and read, and pray.

Poi di dettero questo sposo,
Puro, santo, e grazioso.
Per miracolo di DIO,
La sua verga li fiorio.

Till for thee a mate they find,
Joseph, holy, pure, and kind:
By a miracle of God,
Flowers did blossom on his rod.

Concepisti 'sto Bambino,
Per lo Spirito Divino.
Questo Figlio è vero tuo,
Ma 'sto Sposo non è Padre suo.

But this Infant's birth had place,
By the Holy Spirit's grace:
Thou art Mother . . . But I know,
He no father hath below.

Tu sapesti il che, il come,
Avea DIO da farsi uomo.
Ti dotò di tante dote,
Nella tua concezione.

Thou didst know that God one day
Would put on our mortal clay;
Unto thee, in Earth or Heaven,
Only, such a grace was given.

Dio mandò l'ambasciatore,
Gabrielle con splendore:
Eri in camera serrata,
Quando fece l'imbasciata.

God to thee His angel sent,
Gabriel with the message went.
Thou wast in thy room alone,
When he made his errand known.

E di grazia ti disse piena,
Sei del Ciel fatta Regina!
Il Signore già è con tia:
DIO ti salvi a te, MARIA!

Full of grace! did Gabriel say,
Queen of Heaven thou art to-day
God shall ever with thee be;
Blessèd Mary, hail to thee!

Nel vederti salutata,
Nel interno eri turbata.
Maria, levati ogni pianto;
Ciò è per opera dello Spirito Santo.

As his speech did thus begin,
Troubled was thy soul within
Mary, cast away thy fear,
God it is who sent me here.

Tu sarai Vergine e Madre,
Per la tua grande umilitade.
Benedetto ne sia il frutto,
Redentor del mondo tutto.

Virgin Mother shalt thou be,
For thy great humility:
To a Son thou shalt give birth,
Who will ransom all the earth.

Allora subito umiliata,
Acconsentisti all' imbasciata.
Son l'ancella del Signore;
Venga, venga il Redentore!

Thou in humble worship bent,
To the message didst consent.
I, God's handmaid, wait His will:
Let Him all thy words fulfil.

Di là a tempo tu partisti,
Collo Sposo te ne gisti;
Camminando a Bettelemme,
E passaste tante pene.

When the destined time had come,
Lady, thou didst leave thy home;
Thou and Joseph, with much pain,
Did the town of Bethlehem gain.

Non poteste allor trovare,
Da potervi alloggiare,
Che una grotta alla strania. .
Come facesti, Signora mia?

There no shelter couldst thou find,
House, or roof of any kind:
To a cave thou didst repair . . .
Lady dear, what didst thou there?

Oh, che povero ricetto!
Senza fuoco, senza letto.
Credo ancora che la grotta
Era bagnata e poco asciutta.

What a place to pass the night!
Without bed, or fire, or light.
On the ground thou didst abide;
Damp it was, and cold beside.

A mezza notte partoristi:
Senza dolore lo fecisti;
Questo Figlio inzuccherato
Tanto al mondo desiato!

In this lodging so forlorn,
Just at midnight He was born;
This sweet child, whose wondrous birth,
Long was waited for on earth.

Riverente l'adorasti,
Ed in panni l'infasciasti.
Lo mettesti, Signora, poi,
In mezzo l'asino e lo buoi.

Thou didst worship, while thy hands
Wrapped Him in those linen bands:
Then didst place Him on the hay,
'Twixt the ox and ass He lay.

Una sola mangiatoia . . .
N'è lo ver, bella Signora?
Oh, che notte d'allegrezza!
Tutto gaudio e contentezza!

In the manger! . . . Lady fair,
Was it not as I declare?
Such a night of joy serene,
Ne'er before on earth was seen.

Fu la notte risplendente,
Che stupì tutta la gente.
Nacque Cristo in sulla terra,
Mise pace, e levò guerra.

For at midnight shone such light,
All men wondered at the sight.
Christ is born, and war departs,
Peace He gives to all our hearts.

Li pastori l'adorarono,
Li presenti gli portarono;
E dicevan per la via,
È già nato il gran Messia.

Shepherds, hastening to adore,
While their humble gifts they bore,
Said to all along the way,
Christ the Lord is born to-day.

Ora tu, Signora mia,
Che sei piena di cortesia,
Mostramelo, per favore,
Lo tuo Figlio, il Redentore.

Now, my Lady, kind of heart . . .
Full of courtesy thou art . . .
Pray thee, let me look upon
My Redeemer, thy dear Son.

Madonna

Datemi, oh caro sposo,
Lo mio Figlio grazioso;
Quando vide 'sta meschina,
Zingarella ch'indovina.

Madonna

Pray thee, husband, give me here,
From thine arms my infant dear;
When the gipsy shall him view,
She may tell his fortune too.

Questo, sorella, è lo tuo DIO,
Ch'è lo cuore e lo stato mio.
Guarda bene 'sto bel viso;
Allegrezza di Paradiso.

Here thy God, my sister, see:
Heart, and soul, and life to me!
Look on this sweet face with care;
All of Heaven's joy lies there.[1]

Figlio è dell' eterno Padre
Come DIO di maestade.
E come uomo, e figlio mio,
Per sua mera cortesia.

God His Father is, and He
Like to God in majesty.
Yet like man, and child of mine,
By His courtesy divine.

Ecco sorella, il Redentore;
Venne qua pel peccatore.
Pate Lui, pato io,
E 'sto caro sposo mio.

The Redeemer from above
Come to earth for sinners' love!
Much to suffer here, and we
Shall with Him afflicted be.

Zingarella

Oh che Figlio inzuccherato!
Il mio cuore ha innamorato,
Signora ed Imperatrice,
Benchè sono peccatrice!

Gipsy

Oh, but what a babe divine!
Lady, all this heart of mine
Burns with love as Him I see:
Sinful creature though I be!

Il suo nome è Gesù;
Chi non l' ama non sa più.
Vi domando perdonanza:
Peccator, quest' è l' usanza.

Jesus is His name; their lot
Darkness is, who love Him not.
At His feet shall sinners bow,
Evermore, as I do now.

Buona sorte fu la mia,
D' incontrarvi per la Via.
Mi parlava ognor il cuore,
Mi diceva, Esci fuori!

Happy fate was mine to-day
Thus to meet Thee in the way!
Go! the heart said in my breast:
Go out! And I could not rest.

Già che DIO così destina
Ch' io faccia l' indovina,
Fammi grazia, Signorino,
Dammi qua lo tuo Manino.

Since the good God destined me
Fortune-teller thus to be,
Do not, Lord, my prayer decline,
Lay Thy little hand in mine.

[1] [Here in the original edition of *Roadside Songs* the verses were broken off, and Ruskin appended the following note:—

"I defer the closing portion of the ballad, that it may be read in association with the lovely drawings illustrating it, which, with that of the Madonna entering the Gipsy's hut, in the present number, are to my mind the most joyful, because most credible, sacred designs I ever yet saw. They are beautifully reudered by the photographs: the three originals are all given to Oxford: that of the Jessamine Window, with its pretty lesson in window-gardening, to Sheffield."

The ballad is now given without break. The drawings mentioned by Ruskin are on Plates XIII.–XV., and XII.]

God his Father is, and He
Like to God in majesty.
Yet like man, and child of mine
By his courtesy divine.

Figlio è dell' eterno Padre
Come Dio di maestade
E come uome, e figlio mie.
Per sua mera cortesia.

Naught do I invent or make,
From my heart the Words I take.
Oh, prepare thee, Mother Dear,
Sad and fearful things to hear!

When some years have passed away,
Jesus to Saint John will say,
In the Jordan's stream by thee.
Will I, now Baptized be.

Io non faccio ste parole,
Me le pico dalle cuore:
Bella Madre di clemenza,
Preparatevi a penitenza.

Passati alcuni anni,
Gesù dirà a San Giovanni,
Voglio essere nel Giordano,
Battezzato di tua mano.

Io non faccio 'ste parole,
Me le pico dallo cuore:
Bella Madre di clemenza,
Preparatevi a penitenza.

Naught do I invent or make,
From my heart the words I take.
Oh, prepare thee, Mother dear,
Sad and fearful things to hear!

Passati alcuni anni,
Gesù dirà a San Giovanni,
Voglio essere nel Giordano,
Battezzato di tua mano.

When some years have passed away,
Jesus to Saint John will say,
In the Jordan's stream, by thee,
Will I now baptizèd be.

Ed ancora credo per certo,
Che anderà nel deserto,
A digiunare del continuo,
Senza pane e senza vino.

After that, for many a day,
In the desert He will stay,
Fasting, in that place of dread,
Tasting neither wine nor bread.

Comparsogli l' arso cane,
Vorrà far delle pietre pane;
Ma sarà precipitato,
Per virtù di DIO umanato.

Satan there will Him persuade,
Stones he would to bread were made.
But will shortly, by GOD's might,
Be confused and put to flight.

Anderà in Gerusaleme,
Con gli apostoli insieme.
Entrerà fra rami e palmi,
Canteranno inni e salmi.

Christ shall enter through the gate
Of Jerusalem in state.
Boughs of palm His followers bring,
Hymns and psalms of praise they sing.

Poi anderà il Signore,
Nel Cenacolo con amore;
E gli apostoli inviterà,
Con infinita carità.

Later, He, the Lord of all,
Will the twelve apostles call,
All for love and mercy's sake,
His last supper to partake.

Piglierà nelle sue mane,
E consacrerà il pane;
E dirà lo stesso DIO,
Questo è il corpo mio.

And while all in reverence wait,
He the bread shall consecrate.
This, shall say the Lord of Heaven,
Is My body, for you given.

Dello calice il vino
Muterà in sangue divino.
O gran portento d' amore,
Che farà 'sto gran Signore.

By a word of power, the wine
Will be changed to Blood divine.
Ne'er did earth such wonders view,
As His mighty love shall do!

Fatto già lo sacramento,
Non averà più evento:
D' amore sarà infiammato,
Per salvare l' uomo ingrato.

When the Sacrament is past,
(Of His earthly acts the last,)
Love will Him constrain, to give
All His life, that man may live.

Poi anderà con devozione,
Nell' orto a far orazione.
E lasciata la compagnia,
Patirà la grand' agonia.

Rising, thence He makes His way
To a garden, there to pray:
Bowed with grief, from all apart,
With great anguish in His heart.

Giuda poi delle orazioni,
Ci anderà con finzioni;
E col bacio lo tradirà,
Per trenta denari lo venderà.

On that night of sore dismay,
Judas shall his Lord betray;
And of silver shall but win
Thirty pieces for such sin!

I giudei l' attaccaranno,
E legato lo meneranno,
Come avesse fatto male,
Di tribunale in tribunale.

Then the Jews shall Him surround;
They, alas! will lead Him bound,
To tribunals more than one,
As though evil He had done!

A Anna il presenteranno,
Onde l' interrogheranno,
Sarà poi più tormentato,
In casa d' Erode e di Pilato.

Annas first, with scornful pride,
Shall condemn Him, then beside,
Herod, yes, and Pilate too,
Each will find some torment new.[1]

Dallo guideo Pilato,
Sarà infino condannato.
Grideranno ad alta voce,
Porti Cristo la sua Croce!

By unwilling Pilate, He
Sentenced, at the last, shall be;
To content the Jews, who cry,
Let Him bear His cross and die!

Questo figlio inzuccherato,
Tu lo vedrai ammazzato;
Sopra d' una dura croce,
Figlio bello, Figlio dolce!

This sweet Babe, all prayers in vain,
Must before thine eyes be slain.
On a cross thou shalt Him see . . .
Oh dear Child! and must this be?

Che dolore sentirai,
Quando in braccio l' averai,
Morto, tutto insanguinato,
Il suo corpo scorticato!

Till that day of torment past,
Dead and white and still at last,
In thy arms, with tears and pain,
They will lay thy Child again.

Con gran lacrime e sospiri,
Lo porterai a seppellire,
Dentro un nuovo monumento,
Per tuo ultimo tormento.

With what tears and bitter sighs,
Thou shalt hide Him from thine eyes,
In a tomb which one shall lend . . .
And with this thy woes shall end.

Dunque Madre sconsolata
Facci sempre l' avvocata,
Tu sei Figlia di Dio Padre,
Di suo Figlio sei la Madre.

Listen, Mother full of grief,
Pray for our poor souls' relief!
God thy Father was, and thou
Of His Son art Mother now.

Sposa sei dello Spirito Santo,
Non puoi tu aver già vanto?
Sei arrivata a tanti onori
Per noi altri peccatori.

Thou the Holy Spirit's bride,
O'er all creatures glorified.
And thou wast so glorious made
For our comfort and our aid.

[1] [This verse was omitted in *Roadside Songs*, doubtless by error of a transcriber.]

Non ti vo' più infastidire,
Bella Signora, sai ch'hai fare . . .
Dona la limosinella
A 'sta povera Zingarella.

'Tis enough, thou weary art,
Lady, but before we part,
Unto this poor gipsy, pray
Give an alms, if ask I may.

Non voglio oro, nè denari;
Benchè me ne potrai dare.
Tu sei Stella rilucente,
Hai con te Christo Omnipotente.

Silver ask I not, nor gold;
Though all wealth thy hand doth hold.
Star of light! For on thy breast
Christ, th' omnipotent, doth rest.

Vo' una vera contrizione,
Per la tua intercessione,
Acciò st' alma, dopo morte,
Tragga alle celesti porte.

Grant me, by thy prayers, to win
True repentance for my sin:
That my soul may, soon or late,
Enter through the heavenly gate.

END OF THE SONG OF THE MADONNA AND THE GIPSY [1]

[1] [Miss Alexander has the following note at the end of the song in the original book :—

"After I had finished writing this ballad, an aged lady who had lived much at Lucca told me that the dialect was Lucchese, 'such as they used to speak at Lucca in old times.'"]

NOTES UPON GIPSY* CHARACTER

ANY historian acutely studious of national character, who, fifty years hence, may undertake to give account of the spirit of British legal enactment in this—especially seeking after righteousness—epoch and generation, cannot fail to be greatly struck, and no less edified, by the indignation of all philosophers, magnates, and magistrates against the entirely disreputable, red-cloaked vagabond who has cheated the kitchen-maid out of, say three half-crowns, or in gross cases, half a sovereign, under the monstrous pretence of *telling* her fortune; while no indignation of scathing or scornful quality is ever expressed by any magisterial person against the well-dressed and entirely reputable vagabond, who, at the same instant, in the parlour, may be cheating her master out of all he has in the world, under the quite rational and amiable pretence of *making* his!

Curious, in their measure of human crime, these judicial minds are still more remarkable in their estimate of human intellect. The poor servant-maid who has hoped that in the stars above might be read, by the stained wanderer's dark eyes, some twinkling sentence of her narrow destiny, is below contempt, forsooth, in the minds of persons who believe, on the delicatest suggestion of Mr. Tiggs[1] and the Board, that it is the placid purpose of Heaven, through its rolling years for evermore, to pay them forty per cent. on

* I keep Johnson's and Scott's spelling, as the more familiar English form, rather than Francesca's more graceful "Gypsy," which seems too distinctly to infer their now disproved origin.[2]

[1] [So Ruskin wrote; but the name of the founder in *Dombey and Son* of the Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company is Montague Tigg.]

[2] [The old idea of the connexion of the gipsies with Egypt appears in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act iv. sc. 12.]

their unpaid-up capital, for smoking their cigars and picking their teeth.

In observable relation to these various states of masterly and servile mind, this acute historian of the future will, I doubt not, signalize the constantly indignant use of the word "Impostor" by the classes who will be then seen to have been themselves impostors on the largest and hollowest scale hitherto admired under the sky; and the similarly indignant use of the word "Despot" by the nation which, of all others, has the most dexterous habit of domineering.

And it seems to me that, as compared with either of these two states of mind, or divisions of men, the Gipsy temper is by far honester than the one, and wiser than the other.

To my thinking, he is, in the first place, quite the least of impostors now abroad. He proclaims to you, by his, or her, to both convenient, not immodest, not insolent, dress, that he belongs to an outcast tribe, yet patient of your rejection—unvindictive—ready always to give you good words and pleasant hopes for half a crown, and sound tinkering of pot or kettle for less money. He wears no big wigs—no white ties; his kingship is crownless, his shepherding unmitred; he pins on his rough cloak no false astrology of honour. Of your parliamentary machineries, are any a Gipsy's job?—of your cunningly devised shoddies, any a Gipsy's manufacture? Not against the Gipsy's blow you ironclad yourself;—not by the Gipsy's usury do your children starve. Honestest, harmlessest of the human race—under whose roof *but* a Gipsy's may a wandering Madonna rest in peace?

Nor in less strange and admirable distinction from the herd of unthinking men, does the Gipsy stand to me, in his acute, perseverant, uncontentious extrication of himself from the fetter, or the snare, of every physical and moral despotism, justly so called: and in his love and true attainment of liberty of soul and body in all the meanings and

privileges of liberty that are rational and guiltless. He is imprisoned neither in mansion, nor in money-chest; his paternal acres are by every roadside; he owes neither duty to tenant, nor rent to lord; he is enslaved by no creed—attached to no party—weakened by no dissent—disgraced by no bribe. Disdainful of forms of law, he is neither at pains for their abolition, nor under penalties by their observance; he is untaxed for their support, and unentangled by their practice. One Gipsy goes not to law with another, and I believe the reader will share my own surprise in reflecting how seldom the name of a Gipsy occurs in the public annals of serious crime.

I do not know under what impression of Gipsy birth or character this legend of the Madonna's entertainment by a Zingarella took possession of the Tuscan mind. It is possible that, although not suggested as it might have been in England by the sound of their name, the inaccurate tradition of the origin of the tribe might have brought them to be regarded as the native poor of Egypt. But the ballad is evidently not an ancient one, and I am inclined to think it merely expresses, to the farthest point, the sense of the general fact, evident through all the New Testament narrative, that the close and kindly intercourse of Christ with mortal friends, and their faithfully believing ministry to Him, took place oftener among strangers than with His own people, among the poor rather than the rich, and among those who were reprobate and despised, rather than among men had in honour or esteem.

How deeply and cruelly the scorn of the Gipsy race had infixed itself in the minds of the prosperous middle classes of our own island, at the beginning of the century, may be seen to perfection by merely referring to the article upon them in the old *Encyclopædia Britannica*.[1] I trust the reader may feel, to his great and continued benefit, how much happier and, in the best wisdom, wiser, the Italian peasantry,

[1] [That is, the third edition (Edinburgh, 1797); vol. 8, p. 253. For another reference to the book, see Vol. XVI. p. 418.]

pitying at once, and reverencing, the dejected state and wild instinct of the wanderers—how much happier Francesca, in thus rejoicing to use her best powers in sympathy of conception with them, than the vulgar British citizen, bred amidst the impudence of wealth, and arrogance of philosophy, in conceiving no more of the Zingaro's world-haunting mystery than he has defined in the following words:—

"Gypsies, an outlandish tribe of vagabonds, who, disguising themselves in uncouth habits, smearing their faces and bodies, and framing to themselves a canting language, wander up and down, and under pretence of telling fortunes, curing diseases, etc., abuse the common people, trick them out of their money, and steal all they can come at. . . . It is incredible to think how this regular swarm of banditti has spread itself over the face of the earth. They wander about in Asia, in the interior parts of Africa, and, like locusts, have overrun most of the European nations. . . . In Italy they abound, especially in the dominions of the Church, on account of the bad police, and prevalence of superstition, which permit and entice them to deceive the ignorant."

Such was the state of feeling in Scotland, and more especially in the Gude Town of Edinburgh, towards the Gipsy, at the time when Scott, with his generous power of looking upon the heart, subdued, or kept in the background, all the pretty and virtuous girlhood in the most exquisite of his romances, that he might keep for its best loved and most honoured heroine "that witch, Meg Merrilies, who should have been burned with a tar-barrel twenty years since, for a harlot, thief, witch, and gipsy."*

I have noticed, in former analyses of Scott's work, how much higher in tone, stronger in conception, and sincerely beautiful in treatment, the stories always are in which he freely accepts, and affectionately realizes, the supernatural imagery consecrated by Scottish tradition,[1] than those in which, for fear of an unsympathising public, or supercilious

* The Dominie's description of her, expressing the mind of the orthodox church. [*Guy Mannering*, chap. xlvii.]

[1] [See *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 92 (Vol. XXIX. pp. 455–457).]

review, he minces and explains away what vestiges of marvel he was still fain to use for picturesque effect, to the disappointed fancy, and but awkwardly contented reason, of the philosophical audience. I must ask my readers carefully to observe that this superiority in the more imaginative fiction consists not only in the nobler material and passion of its incidents, (as for instance in the scene of *The Monastery* where the child Mary Avenel sees her father's spirit on Hallowe'en night, as compared with that of *Peveril*, in which the child Julian's courage is only tried by the apparition of the Countess of Derby from behind the sliding panel,[1]) but in the assertion of a great truth respecting human mind and nature, overlooked totally in the meaner conceptions of the sceptic novelist. Namely, that, whatever the truth or error of the tenets represented by any superstitious creed that has had power in this world, the persons now familiarly accused of imposture did with their entire souls and hearts believe in them. The ascription of deliberate and selfish imposture to the priests, augurs, magi, or astrologers of antiquity is only possible in the state of vicious stupor which fastens on men who live in an age of inherent and all-corrupting falsehood—who are accustomed to see trade founded on lying, fortune on gambling, policy on secrecy, and fame on affectation.

The reader who wishes to understand either the Spirit of man, or the laws of God, must put all such conceptions of his race away from him with scorn, and for ever. The Athenians believed in Athena, the Jews in Jehovah, the Arabs in Allah, the Christians in Christ, as positively and utterly as the most advanced modern disbelieves them: the religious ceremonies of every great nation in all the world of all time have been performed by faithful, truthful, and benevolent men, and the practice of vaticination which obtained the confidence of ages did so because the prophet honestly believed himself inspired, and the people

[1] [See ch. iv. of *The Monastery* and ch. v. of *Peveril*.]

intelligently recognized that their fate corresponded in some signal manner to his prophecy.

That is the broad fact and living principle of human history. No liar has ever deceived, nor rascal governed,* the world. What is prevalently taught *may* be wholly, *must* be partly, false, but its power is only the more dependent on the sincerity of its teachers; nor was ever a creed accepted vitally by a multitude of simpletons;—the fool is capable only of *dis*belief.[1] Of course, even by the sincerest men, elements of artifice always have been, and I conclude, though not without hesitation, always must be, used in the management of multitudes, if the will of the multitude is appealed to in the matter. At all times, also, there have necessarily been false priests, unjust judges, bribed soothsayers, and juggling magicians. There have also, at all times, been crowds among the lower orders only too willing to be corrupted, and only too apt to be deceived; but if the falsehood increase, and reach a certain point of dissemination, it expires in the ruin alike of the deceiver and deceived. Periods of crime and catastrophe, often of long duration, first infect, then cleanse, the earth and her inhabitants; but truth and life still bear up her pillars, and succeeding epochs behold the revival of generations strong in faith, and happy in virtue.

Of this much, respecting what we now call priestcraft or prophet-craft, I can absolutely assure, and his own reflection will on sufficient examination of history convince, every honest reader. How far the best and ablest of the human race have been themselves deceived in these their

* Compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, p. 125.[2] "All power, properly so called, is wise and benevolent. There may be capacity in a drifting fire-ship to destroy a fleet; there may be venom enough in a dead body to infect a nation:—but which of you, the most ambitious, would desire a drifting kinghood robed in consuming fire, or a poison-dipped sceptre whose touch was mortal? There is no true potency, remember, but that of help; nor true ambition, but ambition to save."

[1] [One of Ruskin's many allusions to Psalm xiv.: see General Index.]
[2] [Ruskin's reference is to the *octavo* edition; § 112 (Vol. XVIII. p. 478).]

convictions, I do not here assert, or debate: but only farther warn the inquirer not to allow himself to be confused by the equivocations, apologies, or metaphysical reduction to vacuum, with which modern divinity falteringly defends the Faith it is ashamed to utter, and afraid to walk by. All nature is indeed miraculous,—yet St. Peter's draught of fishes[1] was not the same thing as an ordinary haul at Yarmouth: all true speech is prophetic, yet the advice of a sensible friend is not of like authority with the prophecy of Daniel. Let the inquirer judge, according to his modesty and knowledge, whether Shakespeare, Scott, Virgil, Horace, or he, are the shrewder in conception or wiser in belief; but let him be clear in comprehension of their language, and definition of their meaning; and call, with the same unequivocal simplicity, a sibyl a sibyl, a gipsy a gipsy, and a witch a witch.

[1] [John xxi. : Ruskin describes the scene in *Modern Painters,* vol. iii. (Vol. V. pp. 80, 81).]

THE STORY OF EDWIGE

THE woman, in that same picture of St. Zita and the beggars,[1] who is coming round the corner with a little child in her arms, is Edwige Gualtieri, the good widow who was such a friend of poor Ida,[2] and who has been with me so many years. It is very hard for me to write about her without making too long a story, because, during the years we have been together, she has given me such a full account of her life, and it is all so interesting, that I hardly know what to leave out.

She was the eldest daughter of eleven children in a very poor family, and they lived about four miles outside Porta Romana, at a place called Le Tavernuzze,[3] belonging to the parish of Le Rose, so named for the beauty and abundance of the roses that grow there.* Even from her infancy she had a hard life: her father, whose business was to pave roads, she describes as having been "a good man, but a little too fond of society." This is her way of expressing that, when he was working away from home, he would sometimes spend all his earnings in amusing himself with his companions, and forget to send anything to the poor wife and children. So at times they were in great straits.

When the last child was born, the father was away from home, and there was a long bill owing at the baker's; and the day that poor baby was six days old, the baker refused to give them any more bread until the bill was paid. So there were eleven children and nothing to eat! Poor Assunta, (that was the mother's name,) knew that there was a man living outside Porta Prato, who owed some money to her husband, and she felt sure that he would pay it to her if she could see him and tell her story; but there were six miles from her house to his. But she took courage, and, having been first to church, walked the six miles, saw the man, told her story and received the money, and then walked the six miles back again.

Assunta was a saint on earth, if ever there was one. Edwige says that she never complained, nor lost her patience, nor spoke a sharp word, nor was displeased when she saw others better off than herself. Whenever she

* Compare Edwige's description of her native village in the last number of *Fors Clavigera.*[4]

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[1] [Plate IV.]

[2] [See *The Story of Ida;* above, p. 26.]

[3] [A mile and a half beyond the Certosa di Val' d'Ema; now said to be a squalid village, though Murray's *Handbook* (1900, p. 290) adds that beyond the village there are "delightful walks in the woods, which in the spring-time are full of wild flowers."]

[4] [Letter 96, § 3 (Vol. XXIX. p. 519).]

was in any great trouble, and others pitied her, she always said, "I cannot complain; there was One who might have chosen what He would in the world,—and He chose to suffer." She suffered much in her life; hunger and cold, and the neglect of her husband whom she loved, and the loss of several of her children; but it pleased the Lord to give her one blessing, which was the one after all that perhaps she cared most for: those of her children who did not die in infancy, grew up all that she could wish them to be. I saw her not very long before she died; a very sweet, saintly, happy face, beautiful even in old age, with soft dark eyes, and snow-white hair, under her little old-fashioned black velvet cap.

Of course in such a family the children all had to go to work very young, and Edwige, when a very little child, was sent to a mistress to learn to weave linen. She was always fond of work, and learned everything very quickly, and she always looks back on the days that she passed with her mistress as among the happiest of her life. She has told me how, as she used to run along the path between her house and that of her mistress, early in the morning, sometimes she would eat up all the bread that her poor mother had given her to last through the day; and how she used to cry sometimes if she saw the sun rise, because her mistress had said, "I shall expect you when the sun rises above Poggio de Belloccio." But her mistress never scolded when she arrived tired and out of breath, only laughed, and told her not to worry. And when sometimes, later in the day, she began to look pale and dragged, Signora Margherita (that was the name of this good mistress[1]) guessed in a minute what the matter was. "I used to be so glad," Edwige says, "when I saw her look at me, and shake her head, and smile, and then go and open the chest; for I knew she was going to give me a piece of bread. And then she would give me a beautiful large piece of bread, and tell me to go out in the garden and eat it, and rest for a while."

But I must not linger any longer over Edwige's childhood, though there is much that I should like to tell. At eighteen she married Tonino Gualtieri, a stone mason, whom I never knew; and came to live near Florence. Her husband was an excellent man, who is still remembered affectionately by those who knew him. She describes him as a pious, humble, Christian man, very retiring in his ways, *who liked to go to church where no one knew him, and always laid aside part of his earnings in the week to give to some aged or infirm people on Sunday; and he would rather deprive himself of any indulgence than of this pleasure.* During eleven years that they were together, her life was a very happy one. On Sundays (when they usually had a piece of meat for dinner) they used to leave the pentola[2] simmering by the fire, and go out to church together, and afterwards for a walk about the city, *and Tonino would show her the buildings and statues, and they never wanted any other amusement.* After children came, they took them with them.

In those eleven years four children were born, all daughters. Then came that terrible year—if I am not mistaken it was 1855—when the cholera visited Florence; and in that time of terror, when so many were

[1] [For another reference to her, see below, p. 213.]
[2] [See the note below, p. 172.]

dying, the complaint attacked poor Tonino. He had gone out to his work in the morning, apparently as well as usual, but came home a few hours later, so changed that, as she says, one could hardly know him! I will not dwell on the fearful details of his illness and death,—in eleven hours all was over. His last words were, "Take care of the children, Edwige, and the Lord will take care of you."

For some time after he died, Edwige remained like one stunned. She shed no tears, she could neither eat nor sleep; she could not understand what had happened. Only the thought of her children roused her a little. There were no debts. Tonino was a scrupulously honest man, and never bought what he could not afford; but for the rest, they were left with hardly anything in the house. She found in one of his pockets money to the amount of eight lire toscane (I think about six francs, but I do not know exactly how to translate the old money into the new), but she was afraid at first to spend it. "I thought," she said afterwards, "that his employers might have given him that money to buy something for them, and that he had forgotten to tell me of it before he died; for I knew that on Monday we had counted over together what money there was (as we did always at the beginning of the week), and made our expenses accordingly: a little oil, and some potatoes, and other things for the family. So I took the money, and went to the gentleman for whom my husband had worked, and told him about it; but he said, '*Keep it, your husband had earned it.*'" And this was her only inheritance!

Just twenty days after her husband died, a fifth child was born, in the hospital of the Innocenti, where she was obliged to go. And now, as usual on such occasions, all her relations and friends began to tease and worry her, telling her that it was her duty to leave the new baby in the hospital. She had four already, more than she could support, (they said,) but they would try and help her, if she would only behave like a sensible woman, and not undertake the baby too! But her husband's dying words were always in her mind. "I thought," she said, "that this last child was his, just the same, though he had never known her, and she looked more like him than any of the others; and I thought that when I should die and see my Tonino again, he would ask me if I had been good to the children, and how could I ever tell him that I had abandoned his little one? Besides, I thought that if the Lord had not wanted me to have the child, He would have taken her Himself; for no one thought she was going to live when she was born. I remember the head nurse said to me: '*You have a little daughter; give her your blessing and let God have her.*'" This head nurse was very kind to her, and took her part when others blamed her, and she gave a pretty little cap to the baby (which was named Tonina), and several other things.

Edwige stayed a week at the hospital, no more; and then she took the baby in her arms and walked home with it,* for she could not leave her children any longer. They were staying with some of her poor neighbours, who could not, she thought, afford to keep them. It was a very hot day, and she felt very sad and desolate as she carried the fatherless child up the lonely dusty road to St. Francesco di Paolo, where she lived, and

* Compare, above, her mother's twelve-mile walk, p. 169. [J. R.]

where she knew that the house was empty of provisions; but she thought again of what she considered her husband's promise—"*Take care of the children, Edwige, and the Lord will take care of you.*" An old gentleman who lived near by—he was a good man, but not rich—saw her going into the house with her baby, and he sent her over a pentola* of soup, which had been prepared for his own dinner.

Her friend the head nurse had given her some broken pieces of bread, so she fed the children, and thought that the promise was being fulfilled. And now commenced a long period of literal living by Faith. She began immediately to work; at first she went to take care of the cholera patients, of whom there were many; afterwards she used to go out washing, or to help the reapers at harvest time; or, when families moved from one house to another, she would help move the furniture. When one of her neighbours moved to a place outside Porta la Croce, about three miles from where she lived, she carried all the furniture there, making of course several journeys. She hired a hand cart for the heavier things, and the rest she took in her arms. But all her work would never have been sufficient, for there were six mouths then to feed, if she had not been helped much. "Often," she says, "very often we have gone to bed without a crumb of anything in the house to eat the next day, and without knowing where we could find any; but in the morning God would send some one to knock at the door and bring us help. He knew that I had five babies!" Of course, most of the help came from very poor people: I believe it is always so; the poor are those who pity the poor. There was one poor old beggar who used to go about the country with a linen bag, and he would stop at her door and give her the best pieces of bread out of his bag, saying, "You are poorer than I, because you have these children." One day there was nothing in the house to eat excepting a few beans which a contadino had given one of the children, and they were not enough. So Edwige went to a lady for whom she sometimes worked, meaning to ask for something, but she had never begged before, and her courage failed, and when she tried to speak, she burst into tears, and could say nothing. And the lady said, "Do not try to speak, I know what you want!" and gave her a loaf of bread.[1]

After a while Edwige obtained regular work for a washerwoman in Borgo St. Frediano, who employed several women. She used to go at six in the morning and work until eight in the evening, taking an hour's rest in the middle of the day, and for this she received eighteen krazie.† Meanwhile the children were left at home under charge of their eldest sister, Clementina, a pretty, delicate, little blue-eyed girl, then eleven years old. Edwige would leave them what she could to eat during the day, but there was never enough; and sometimes when she came home

* "Pentola," a two-handled earthen pot, chiefly used for boiling; saucepan-shape, and holding from one to five quarts. "Pentolino," an earthen pitcher with one handle, holding not more than a quart. [J. R.]

† Properly "crazie," but I spell with a k because I like the look of it better. A crazia is seven centesimi, not quite three farthings. [J. R.]

[1] [For the story of this lady, see below, p. 226.]

in the evening, she would find that poor Clementina had eaten nothing all day. "I gave it all to the little ones," she would say, "because I could not bear to hear them cry." As for Edwige herself, she was nearly starved, and has told me that sometimes it seemed as though the odour of the bread in the bakers' shops would drive her crazy.

She could not support such a life long; she was attacked with varicose veins, the torment of washerwomen. For some time she concealed her illness, for love of her children, and worked when in great pain, and when she should have been in her bed; she grew worse, and one day, when she was hanging out the clothes to dry in the yard, one of the veins broke; she fell to the ground, and was not able to rise. Her companions, who all liked her, carried her into the house, and did what they could for her; they put together a little money for her, and hired a cab to send her home. And then came a long and painful illness, from which she did not recover fairly for two years, and she has never been very strong since. When she was ill, she used to braid straw all day (an art that she had learnt from her mother), and when she was not able to sleep, which was often, she would braid all night too, in the dark. And a friend who still lives near her, named Palmira, used to sell the braid for her, and bring her straw to make more.

One night, as she was dividing the bread to the children, she said, "We must eat moderately to-night, because this bread must last to-morrow." And little Tonina, then six years old, said, "I do not think so, for we are told to say in the Lord's Prayer, *Give us this day our daily bread.* God would never have told us to ask for it, if He had not meant to give it to us. Let us eat all that we need to-night, and then say that prayer all together, and He will send us some more to-morrow." This was such plain common sense that there was no contradicting it; the hungry family finished all the bread that evening; then knelt down, and said the Lord's Prayer with great devotion. And the next morning, being stormy weather, a neighbour sent them in a little provision; and Tonina was delighted, and said, "You see that I had reason!" I think that was the last time: the family were never reduced to such great extremity again.

For after Edwige had recovered, she entered our service as my particular attendant, coming every morning, and staying with me for some hours. And since that, the course of our lives has been together. Her children are all married now, and all mothers of families, and she lives very happily with Clementina and Clementina's children, when she is not with me. Now that she is not cold, nor hungry, nor over-worked, she considers herself a very fortunate and wealthy person; and sometimes says that she is *living in gold!*

But before I leave Edwige, though I have written so much about her, I must tell some of her sayings, which are extremely original. I remember when the marble group of "Pirro e Polissena"[1] was first exhibited (the group which is now under the Loggia de' Lanzi), she and I went to see it, and she looked at it for a long time, and never spoke a word, but sighed deeply, and grew very pale. After we came away, I asked her what she thought of it, and she answered very sadly, "I think he was a very wicked young man; but then he was only a soldier, poor creature!"

[1] ["The Rape of Polyxena," a modern Italian work (1864), by Fedi.]

Edwige does not admire the army. But her sayings are not always sayings to laugh at. Once, a great many years ago, she and I were trying to accomplish something which we considered of consequence for some of our friends, and a person who had promised to help us failed at the last minute. I was much discouraged, and said, "We have no one now but the good Lord to help us." And she answered contentedly, "I rather think, if we have Him, we shall not want any one else."

She was talking with me one day about some rich people who made very hard bargains with the poor whom they employed, and she said, "Ladies and gentlemen always do such things, and see no harm in it. I suppose they think there is no need for them to be good. They are so rich, they can give away money in charity, and they think that they can go to heaven that way, and perhaps they will; but I think it would be better if they would try and be good too." I told her that my own father had never done such things, to which she replied, "But he was good, *just as if he had been poor.*"

In the days at Venice, after the *cucina economica* had disabled my eyes,[1] I used to amuse myself by taking Edwige to see the pictures, and listening to her remarks about them. She preferred to anything else the immense "Paradise" by Tintoretto, in the Ducal Palace,[2] which she looked at for a long time in silence; and then astonished the custode, who had been telling a long story about the size, price, and artistic merits of the picture, by saying, "I hope there is a place for *us* up there, don't you?" I wish you could have seen that custode stare! I suppose nobody ever made such a remark to him before.

Since you have bought my book,[3] nobody ever advises me at all (excepting Edwige, whose ideas are somewhat original). She seems to think that she knows all about the habits, dresses, etc., of saints and angels. One day she was quite indignant because a visitor said that she had seen the Madonna painted without shoes. "Saint Joseph was a poor man, I know," said Edwige; "but I am *sure* he would have given his wife a pair of shoes. Who knows how fond he was of her!"

I remember long ago, one day when I was looking at the sky, I said, "I wonder why I cannot paint a sky like that?" and she said, "I suppose it is because the Master can do better than the scholar,"[4]—which saying has gone farther toward *keeping me from being discouraged than anything that any one ever said to me.* (Italics mine.—J. R.)

She did not care much for the historical pictures in the Ducal Palace, —all she said about them was that "The people who used to live in this house seem to have been generally good people." She saw so many of them painted saying their prayers, that she took an impression that was their usual occupation. Next to the "Paradise," she fell in love with the

[1] [The words *Cucina economica* (now applied to "soup kitchens") were, at the time to which Miss Alexander here refers, the name given to an iron cooking range, then a novelty in Italy. For the failing of the artist's eyesight (formerly very keen, as she says in Vol. XXXI. p. 390), see the Introduction, above, pp. xxxi.–xxxii.]

[2] [For Ruskin's description of the picture, see Vol. XXII. pp. 102–108.]

[3] [See the Introduction, above, p. xxii.]

[4] [Compare above, p. 101.]

"Calling of Matthew from the Receipt of Custom" in S. Giorgio de Schiavoni,[1] of which she said it made her feel "just like hearing a chapter in the Bible." The evening after we had seen it, she told me she had been thinking about that picture all day. "That poor man, how happy he was when the Lord Jesus called him! And when I saw it, I was thinking—supposing He should call us, should *we* go so willingly? And I thought, if He called me, it would be a great happiness, only I should be a little sorry to leave the Signorina; but still, if He told me to come, I would. And the Signorina would be sorry to leave the Mama, but if He called her she would have to go." So much for Edwige's opinion on Venetian art.

One day she went to cross the traghetto, but it was a little rough, and she expressed some reluctance to cross "the ocean." The gondolier assured her there was no danger, but she told him she really could not take the responsibility, it would be so inconvenient for her padrona if she should be drowned while *she was on a journey.*

When first she came to us I had a fine bed of mignonette, just coming into blossom. One morning I went into the kitchen and found Edwige cutting every stalk of it into shreds for the soup. She had cut it all down, mistaking it for spinach.

Edwige had other domestic trials: eggs grew scarce, and she remarked, with very unusual severity, that hens were "bestie tanto perverse," for they always stop laying just when eggs cost the most!

Once at l'Abetone they had a Christmas performance of the Nativity, followed by Pulcinella, which seemed a queer combination; but Edwige, who was present with fourteen grandchildren, looked on the whole affair, Pulcinella and all, in a purely devotional spirit, and came to us the next day, looking as if she had been in heaven. She said that the porter's young wife, Cecchina, who seemed to think that the little wooden figures were alive, asked if the Gesù Bambino was born every year! Edwige shook her head as she told me this with an air of compassion, and remarked, "Some people have ideas!"

Yes, Edwige, dear; and some people haven't any,—but we, at least, who have heard your story, shall have a better idea for ever of all that is serviceablest in earthly duty—sacredest in mortal sorrow—and purest in the religion which has alike known, and visited, the affliction of the fatherless and the widow; and kept itself—as the very clouds of Morning—unspotted from the World.[2]

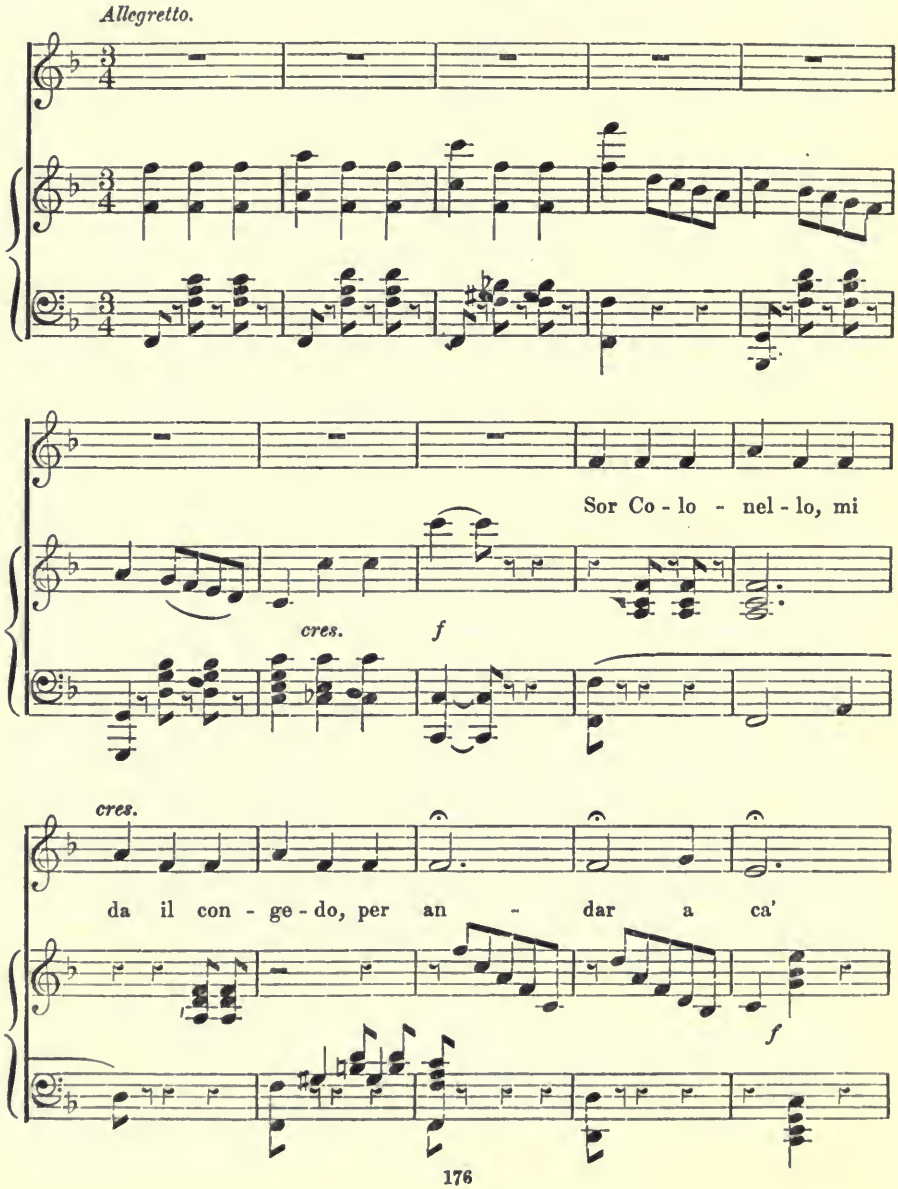
JOHN RUSKIN.

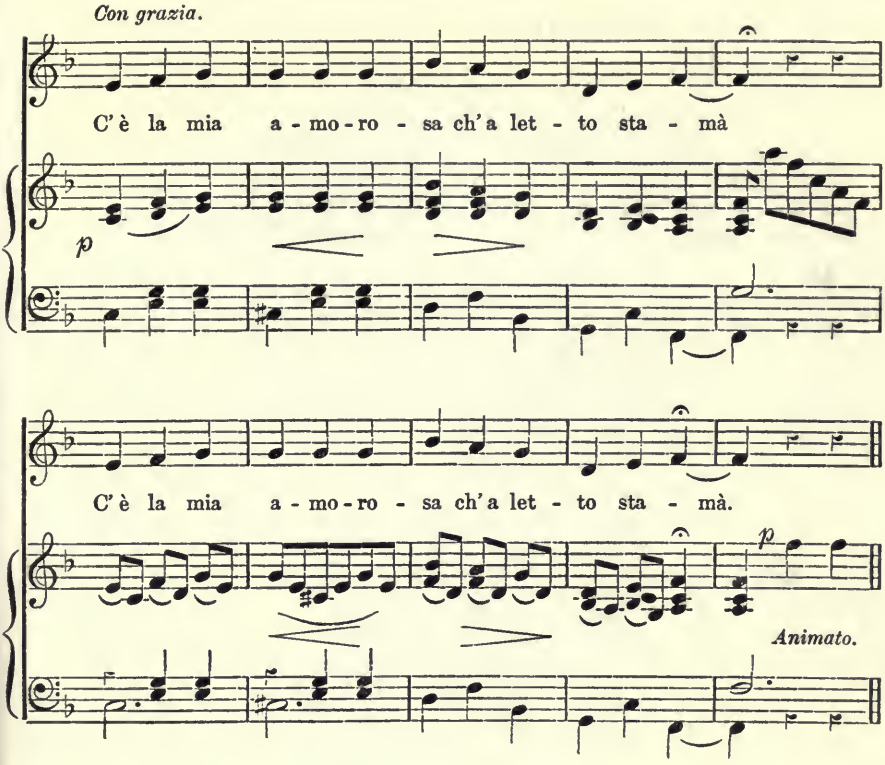
BRANTWOOD, *8th February*, 1885.

[1] [See Plate lxiii. in Vol. XXIV.]
[2] [James i. 27.]

THE COLONEL'S LEAVE

(IL CONGREDO DAL COLONELLO)





"Sor Colonello, mi da il congedo,
Per andar a ca';
C'è la mia amorosa
Ch' a letto sta mà."

"Il congeda ti sia gia' dato,
Pur che ci va,
Pur che ci va in compagnia
De' bravi soldà."

Quando furon dentro il castello,
Sentiron suonar:
"È la campana della mia amorosa,
Me la vanno a portar."

"Fermati, fermati pur un tantino,
Riposati un po'!"
"Vo' dar un bacio alla mia amorosa,
E poi me ne vo.

"Colonel, give me leave a little,
That I home may go:
For my love in bed lies fading,
Sick, and sinking low."

"Leave to go I give thee,
Also shalt thou have
With thee, for thine honour,
Brothers of the brave."

As they reached the village,
All the bells did ring:
"These are the bells for my true love,
News of death they bring."

"Stay, poor soldier, rest a little,
Weary must you be."
"I will kiss my love and leave her,
There's no rest for me.

"Parlami, parlami, bocchin d'amore,
Parlami un po'!
Tu non vedi che l'è estinta,
Parlar non ti può.

"Addio Padre, addio mia Madre,
Addio fratei!
Se ci fusse la mia amorosa
Contento sarei."

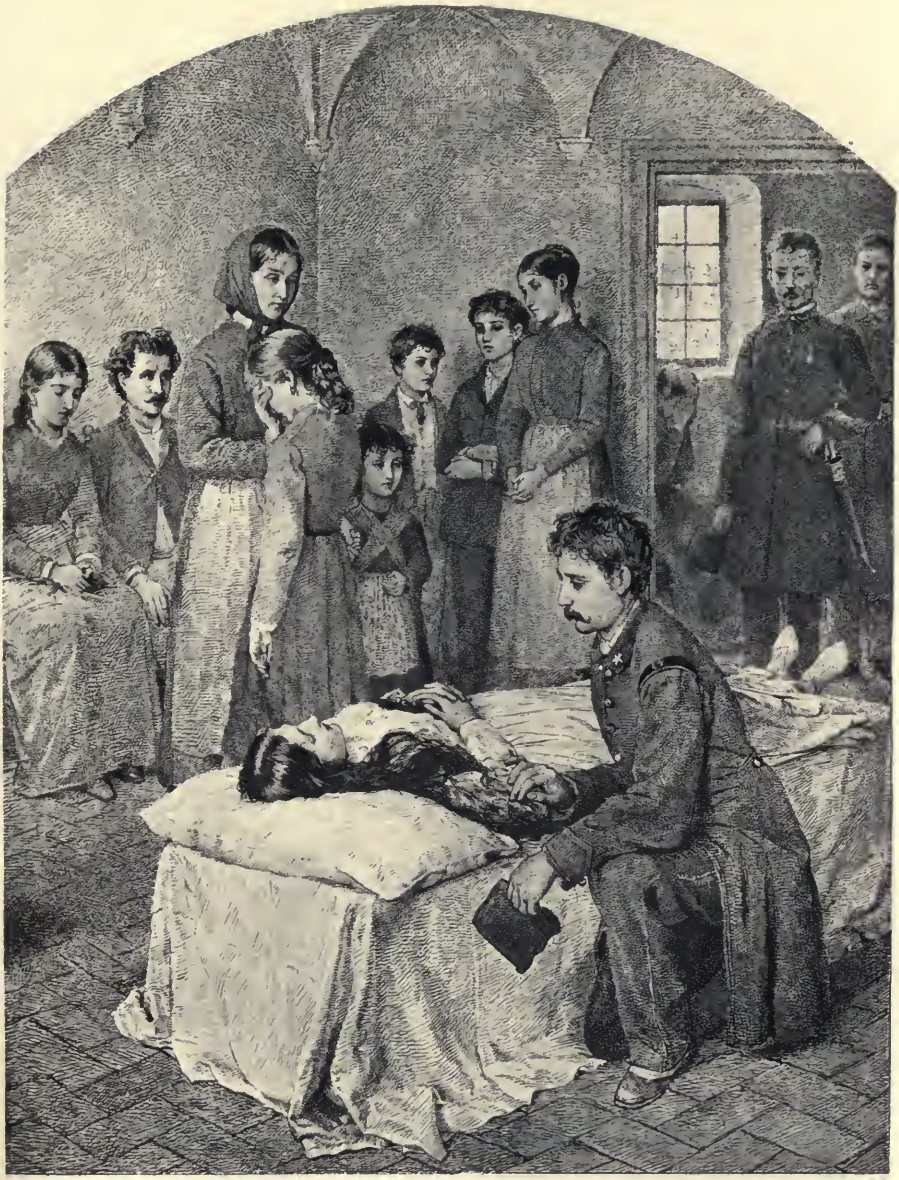
"Little mouth, so loving,
Speak to me, I pray!
Never more those lips can open,
Life has passed away.

"Farewell father, mother, brothers,"
Said he as he went,
"If my love were with me
I were well content."[1]

[1] [This song is on leaves 42 and 43 of the original MS. book (see synopsis, p. 45), where Miss Alexander gives the following note:—

"This little song was taught me by Annina Bini, a beautiful woman and sweet singer of S. Vito a Bellosguardo."

The title here given is Ruskin's; the music in the original MS. book is headed "The Soldier's Love" (l'Amorosa del Soldato).]



Parlami parlami bocchin d'amore

THE STORY OF FAUSTINA

In that little group about the S. Marcello fountain[1] there is a girl who has a story so very sad that I have been much inclined to leave it out, and would have done so, only it is about the conscription, and I have not told anything about the conscription yet, which is the ruin of so many families, and which I hate more than I do anything else almost in the world. People say that I ought not to hate it, that it is a useful and necessary institution; and if I ever begin to say what I think about it, they only laugh at it, and have not patience to answer me, nor even to listen to what I say. And because I am tired of being laughed at, I do not talk about it any more; but I should like just once to tell a little, not of what I think, but of what I know, about it, and so I am going now to tell about Faustina Petrucci.

She is one of the two girls who are standing talking together, with children in their arms, near the fountain in the picture. She is the one who stands nearest the fountain, and I drew her as she was tending a friend's baby (poor little Eugenia, who only lived for a few years; she is the baby in the yellow dress) and talking with the S. Marcello caffettiere's daughter, who had come out of her father's shop with her little sister in her arms. Faustina was the daughter of a Pian Sinatico man, a cousin of Pietro Petrucci of whom I have just written,[2] and was the only girl in a large family of boys. She was not pretty, and when I knew her she was yellow and sickly, but she had much grace in all her ways, and no one could help liking her. She had uncommon intelligence: in her childhood she had been taught to read, nothing more; and she taught herself to write, fairly well, without help from any one. Afterwards she taught herself to read French, all by herself, with the help of an old school-book which some stranger passing through the place had left behind. She read all the books that came in her way, and remembered everything in them; so that, when I first knew her, she had a very curious collection in her head of things true and false. But the one thing for which Faustina was remarkable, and which made her different from every one else, was her musical nature; I call it a musical nature, because it was much more than a musical talent, which many people have; she seemed as if she were all full of music, it was more natural to her than language; whenever she felt anything deeply, instead of speaking, she would begin, it seemed to me without knowing it, to sing some song which had a bearing on it. Her voice, whether in singing or speaking, was one of the sweetest that ever a woman had.

In every way, Faustina was much removed from commonplace people; and sometimes I have thought that she had considerable greatness of character (if I know what greatness of character means), though I never heard any one say that about Faustina. But I know that when a poor

[1] [The reference is to the drawing which in the original MS. book headed the song "I was born when roses were blooming" (see p. 184 here). The leaf with the drawing is added in this edition (Plate XVII.). S. Marcello, eight miles from Pracchia; from it a road turns NW. to Cutigliano.]

[2] [See now pp. 204, 205.]

girl at S. Marcello was dying of a complaint that was considered contagious, and every one was afraid to go near her, and her poor mother was worn almost to death trying to take care of her all alone, Faustina went to the house, as soon as she heard about it, and did everything, although she was far from strong; and when the girl was not able to rest in any position in her bed, Faustina would sit on the bed and hold her in her arms, and there she could sleep when she could not sleep anywhere else. With all this, Faustina was a very lively, entertaining companion, all the time finding something to laugh at, or to make others laugh at, with a certain peculiar drollery about her which all her troubles have never been able quite to extinguish.

Now Faustina used often to go and stay with an old aunt at S. Marcello: her father had married a second wife, and though Faustina did not quarrel with her step-mother, I do not think there was any great love lost between them. And it was when she was staying with this old aunt that Beppe Fini fell in love with her. He was only eighteen then; she, I believe, a year older. Beppe was an orphan boy, and had nothing excepting a little linen and furniture which he had inherited from his parents. But he had inherited also singular beauty; and he had the polite and rather dignified manners which I have often observed among the S. Marcello people. I do not know how he ever came to fall in love with that little ugly droll Faustina, but that he did so, and that his affection for her was very deep and unchanging, is certain. I think that the charm at first was in her singing, for Beppe was a born musician, like herself, and could sing almost as well as she could, and used to play the clarionet in the San Marcello band. And he and she used to sing together, and he used to play to her, and they were both as happy as the day is long. They thought then that they should be married as soon as he had passed the conscription, and though they knew that they should be very poor, they were willing to face it, for the sake of being together. Faustina was a dressmaker, and could earn enough for her share of the housekeeping expenses. But as soon as her family knew of the engagement, trouble began. Her aunt, after trying in vain to reason her out of so imprudent an attachment, sent her home to her father at Pian Sinatico; and he was very angry, forbad her seeing Beppe any more, and had some violent scenes with her, which had no effect excepting to terrify her and make her ill. Her great misfortune was that she had another admirer, whom she did not care for, but whom her relations wished her to marry, because he had a little money.

However, while all this was going on, Beppe drew his number in the conscription, and it was a bad number. He and Faustina, with the hopefulness common to very young people, had always felt as if this could not be; it seemed too terrible to be possible! Then they hoped that they would escape when he came to pass the medical examination; but there was no chance. Beppe was strong and healthy, as well as handsome, and so he had to go. Oh, how thankful poor mothers and fathers are sometimes to think that their sons are lame, or blind of an eye, or have any defect or infirmity which may incapacitate them for military service! I think they are more thankful, sometimes, than people are for having healthy children in countries where there is no conscription. Faustina *would* see Beppe before he went away: no one could prevent her; and they

promised to write to each other, and to wait for each other, until his time of service should be over. They did not think, then, that the waiting would be lifelong.

It was the summer after Beppe went away that I first came to know Faustina. I was painting a picture then, away from the house where we were staying (we had gone to pass the summer months at S. Marcello), and I wanted some one to go with me, that I might not be quite alone; and I had taken a fancy to Faustina's sweet voice and lively fanciful way of talking, and so engaged her as a temporary attendant. She looked pale and poorly, for she had been very ill after Beppe went away; but he wrote her kind comforting letters, and she was beginning to take courage again. So she and I used to have quite gay times, singing and telling stories.

I cannot tell which of us knew the most stories; I can only say that neither she nor I ever came to an end, all the time we were together. But my conscience was rather troubled, finding that she believed all my stories, Cinderella, Beauty and the Beast, etc., as if they were gospel. One day when I told her a story, I think out of the Bible, I said to her, "*This* one is true;" and she answered, "I rather think they are *all* true." I tried to persuade her that some of the fairy stories were, to say the least, improbable; at which she said, doubtingly, "I suppose when they *print* the stories they put in some little things that are not true: that is probably what is meant by *liberty of the press!*"

In those days she told me all about Beppe, and showed me his likeness, which she kept between the pages of an old *Gerusalemme Liberata,* that she used to bring and read to me sometimes while I worked. Only she used to leave out all the passages that described battles, because she said she was afraid that Beppe might have to go into a battle some day or other, and she did not like to think about it.

And now I have to tell about what happened to Beppe Fini in the army. He entered it a strong, healthy, high-spirited young man: I know what he looked like then, for the next winter his regiment came to Florence, and Faustina wrote to him to come and see us, and he came. His face had already begun to look sorrowful, and he pined for his home and Faustina; but he still retained his healthy colour, and the clear eyes, and brilliant white teeth, and light step, that he brought away from the mountains.

His superior officers were all very kind to him, and he was a great favourite with them, and with his companions; so this is no story of *cruelty* that I have to tell, but only a common, very common story of events which in the army seem to be inevitable. He came from a cool high place in the Apennines: before long his regiment was sent into a low part of Calabria, where the climate is, for the mountain people of Tuscany, very dangerous. Of course there are plenty of Calabrian soldiers, and the climate is not unhealthy for them; but *they* are all sent somewhere else, very likely to pass the winter at Milan or Turin, where the cold is as dangerous for them as the heat and heavy air of their country is for others. The one thing that seems to be considered needful, in the Italian army, is to remove the soldiers as far as possible from their own homes. Then, Beppe had been used to living in great part on bread or polenta made of chestnuts (for S. Marcello is in the beautiful chestnut country), and all his living had been of the plainest and lightest. When he was in the army they gave him food which perhaps was better, but for him it was

unwholesome—meat and soup cooked with lard, etc. He had been used to drinking some of the best water in the world, from the clear cold springs of S. Marcello; and in the low marshy place where he was sent the water was so bad that he could hardly drink it. He resisted all this for a while, for he was strong; but at last his health gave way. He became ill, and they sent him to the hospital; where he lingered for a long time, sometimes better and sometimes worse. Finally, seeing that he did not recover, they sent him back to San Marcello.

When he arrived there, Faustina, who had been looking forward with delight to seeing him once again, was much shocked at his changed appearance, and wrote to me in great trouble. She was in trouble then in more ways than one: her father had died, leaving his family not well off; and the old aunt with whom she lived had become infirm, so that there were ways enough for Faustina's small earnings to go, and she could not do for Beppe what she would have liked to do. Still, with all her burdens, she spared a little time, and a little money too, for him: at least there was no one then who had any authority to keep her away from him. After some months of slow recovery, he seemed to be nearly himself again; and I suppose, if he could have stayed at S. Marcello then, that his life might have been saved. But as soon as he began to be pretty well again, he had to go back to the army. And there he broke down again, and went to the hospital again; and when, after another long time of waiting, he was sent back to S. Marcello for good, the chance of saving him was gone. He did not die all at once. I think it was nearly a year that he lingered along, suffering much in mind and body, feeling himself a burden on his relations, distressed and ashamed at having to accept charity from strangers, still more distressed at the thought of leaving Faustina alone and unprotected in the world. She continued to hope against hope almost until the last minute, and she induced him to come to Florence for medical advice, and wrote a letter recommending him to me; but there was little that I could do for him.

The doctors were kind to him: everybody was always kind to Beppe Fini, because nobody could help liking him; and, besides, they said that his complaint was something very singular and interesting, and they wrote accounts of it to medical journals. But they could do nothing for him, and after a while he thought that he would rather go home to die. He had not even a bed left to die in, for this story, which I have told in so few words, is a story, not of months but of years; and during the time that he had been in the army, his sister-in-law and her family had used up and worn out all the little supply of homespun linen that his poor mother had left him. It did not make much difference; he would have been obliged to go to the hospital just the same in any case, only I think he would have liked to leave Faustina that linen, which they thought once would have served for the house that they meant to have together. He did leave her a few trifles, which he had saved because they were not worth enough to sell. I wrote to her to know if I could do anything more for poor Beppe, and she showed him my letter. He said, "Ask her to write me a letter that will give me courage to die." I do not know what I wrote to him, but I am afraid I did not feel very courageous myself. Faustina has the letter now; she has kept everything that belonged to him. Before he died, he tried to persuade her to marry her

old admirer, of whom I have spoken before, and who had always continued faithful to her, and is so now, I believe. But she could not make up her mind to do it, not even to content Beppe, who wanted to think that some one would be kind to her and take care of her after he was gone.

And so he died, worn out at last and glad to go, in the hospital of San Marcello; and so ended their seven years' engagement. Faustina is living at Pian Sinatico now; her step-mother (who is pretty, and about her own age) is married again, and she has gone to keep house for her brothers. She has grown old before her time, and has never cared much again for anything in the world; still she is too busy and too unselfish to be very unhappy. She is always taking care of somebody's neglected children, or helping to nurse some sick neighbour; she still sings very sweetly, and when she is with others she retains so much of her old lively and rather comical ways, that few, if any, ever imagine what a sorrow she carries about, and always will carry about with her. Once a year, in the summer time, she puts on the black woollen dress that is her best, and her white silk handkerchief, and walks up to l'Abetone to see me, and as soon as she and I are alone together, her first words are: "You remember poor Beppe?" It seems in a certain way to comfort her to know that there is another who remembers him kindly besides herself. But when I see the white threads in her black hair, and the lines across her forehead, and think what put them there, and how young she is; and then think of Beppe in his undistinguished grave in the Campo Santo at S. Marcello, and how needless, and, as far as we can see, useless, it has all been,—well, I hope I do not feel any way that a Christian ought not to feel, but I am not quite so sure about it as I should like to be.

And so now I have finished all the stories of these hard and obscure lives, which most people care so little to hear about. There are a few other faces in the *Roadside Songs* about which I have told nothing; but the reason was, because I had nothing to tell that could interest any one. Often I have asked people to sit for their portraits of whom I knew nothing, just because I liked their faces. I do not know what is to be done with these few stories that I have written.* I wish that I could think they might induce any one who may happen to see them to feel kindly towards my poor friends and others who are like them; and that is the most that I desire for them.

* The Story of Faustina originally closed the series of tales[1] written by Miss Alexander in illustration of her drawings. I have placed it here that the two bereavements of Love by War might be together thought upon. The drawing of the Fountain at S. Marcello was too delicate to admit of being rendered by photography; for the present it is at Brantwood, but I intend presenting it to Girton College, Cambridge.[2] Of the song, which here follows on her story,—it is written under the drawing,—Francesca says:—

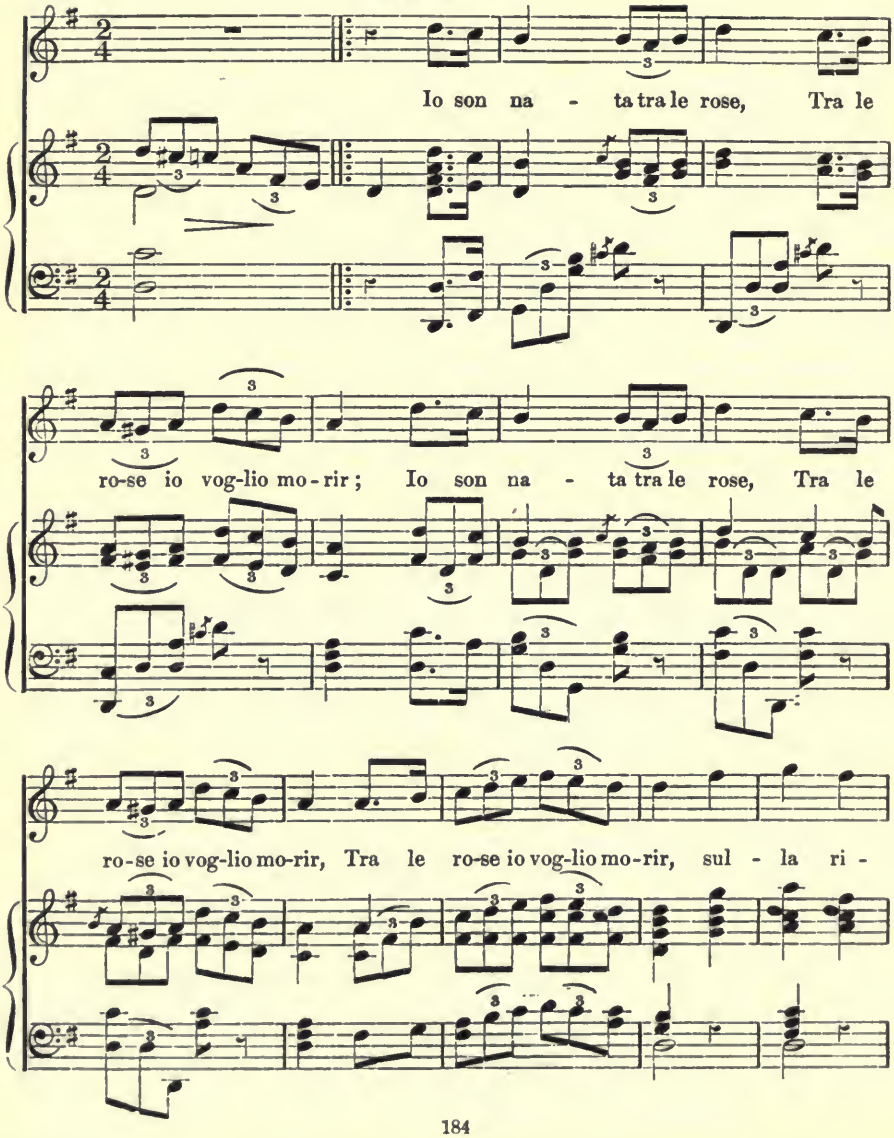
"This little song, which I have put here only for its pretty tune, was taught me by Faustina Petrucci of S. Marcello, the sweetest of all the mountain singers. The picture at the top of the page represents the fountain in the piazza at S. Marcello, as I saw it from the window where Faustina used to sit and sing to me." [J. R.]

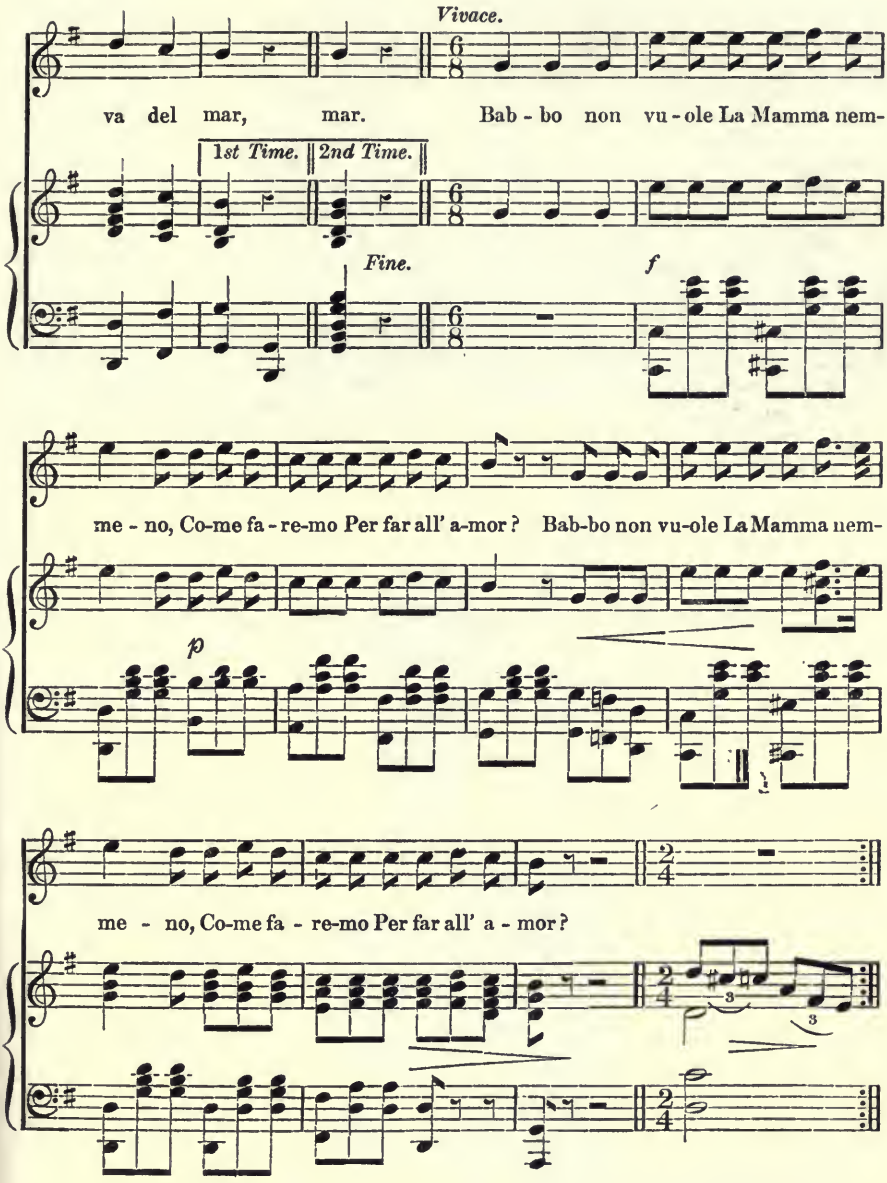
[1] [For Ruskin's re-arrangement of the tales, see p. 48.]
[2] [The drawing is now there.]

TRA LE ROSE

(THE SONG OF ROSES)

Andantino.




Vivace.
va del mar, mar. Bab - bo non vu - ole La Mamma nem-
1st Time.
2nd Time.
Fine.
f
me - no, Co-me fa - re-mo Per far all' a-mor? Bab-bo non vu-ole La Mamma nem-
p
me - no, Co-me fa - re-mo Per far all' a - mor?

Ed io son nata tra le rose,
Tra le rose io voglio morir,
Tra le rose io voglio morir, sulla riva del mar!

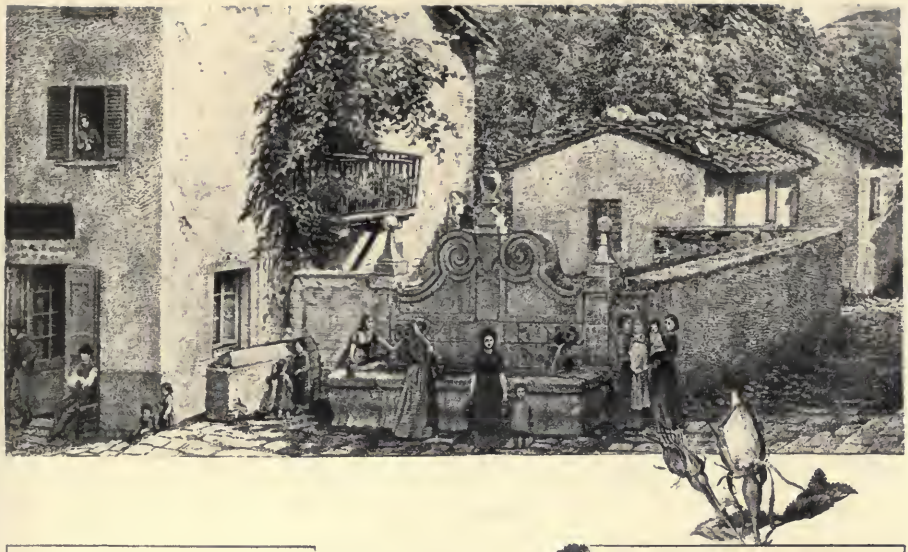
Babbo non vuole . . .
La Mamma nemmeno!
Come faremo
Per far all' amor?
Ed io son nata, etc.

Babbo non vuole,
La Mamma neanco!
Ho pianto tanto,
Il Cielo lo sa!
Ed io son nata, etc.

I was born when roses were blooming,
And now 'mid the roses I'll die.
And now 'mid the roses I'll die, on the shore of the sea!

Father forbids it,
And so does my mother!
We love each other
But what can we do?
I was born when roses, etc.

Father and mother
Will soon be left lonely.
Heaven knows only
The tears I have shed!
I was born when roses, etc.



I was born when roses were blooming,
And now mid the roses I lie,
And now mid the roses I lie on the shore of the sea!

Father forbids it,
And so does my Mother!
We love each other
But what can we do!

I was born when roses &c

Father and Mother
Will soon be left lonely.
Heaven knows only
The tears I have shed!

I was born when roses &c

Ed io son nata tra le rose.
Tra le rose io voglio morir.
Tra le rose io voglio morir sulla riva del mar!

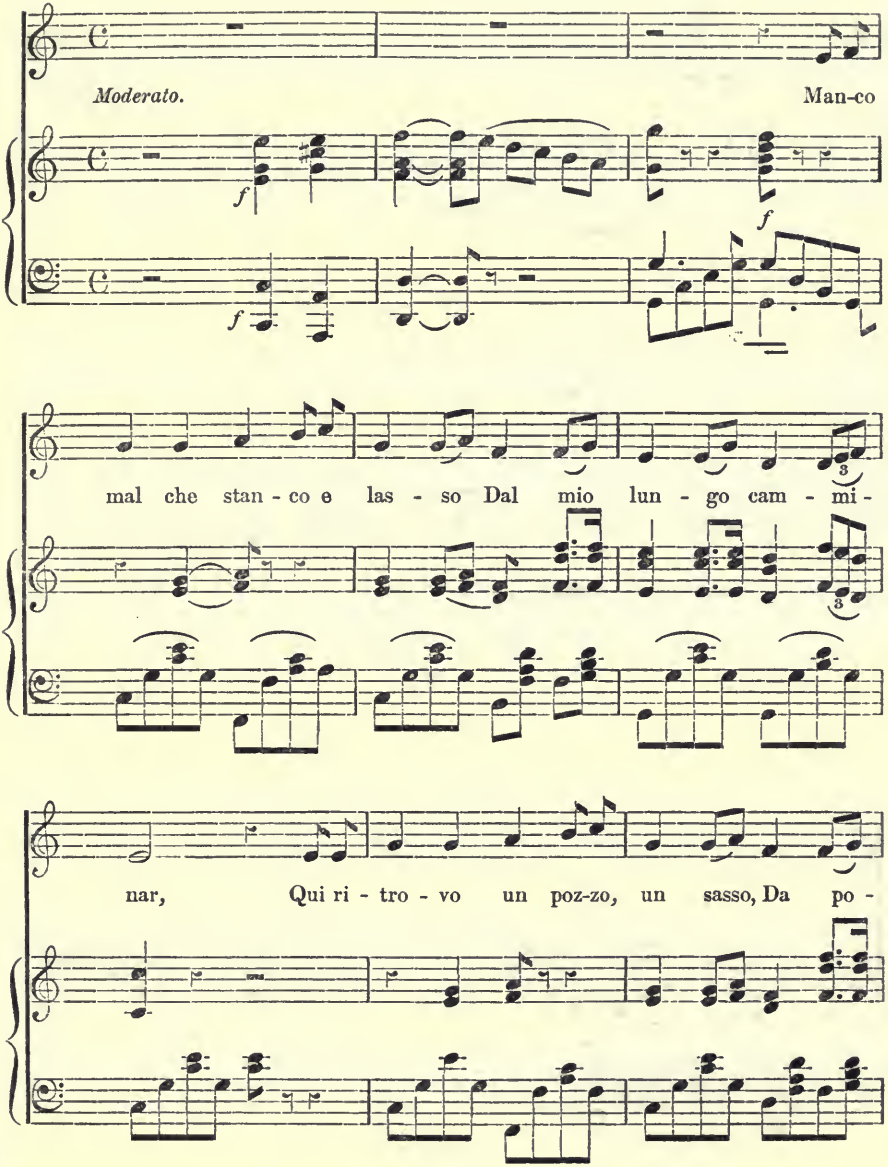
Babbo non vuole.....
Ma Mamma nemmeno!
Come faremo
Per far all'amor?

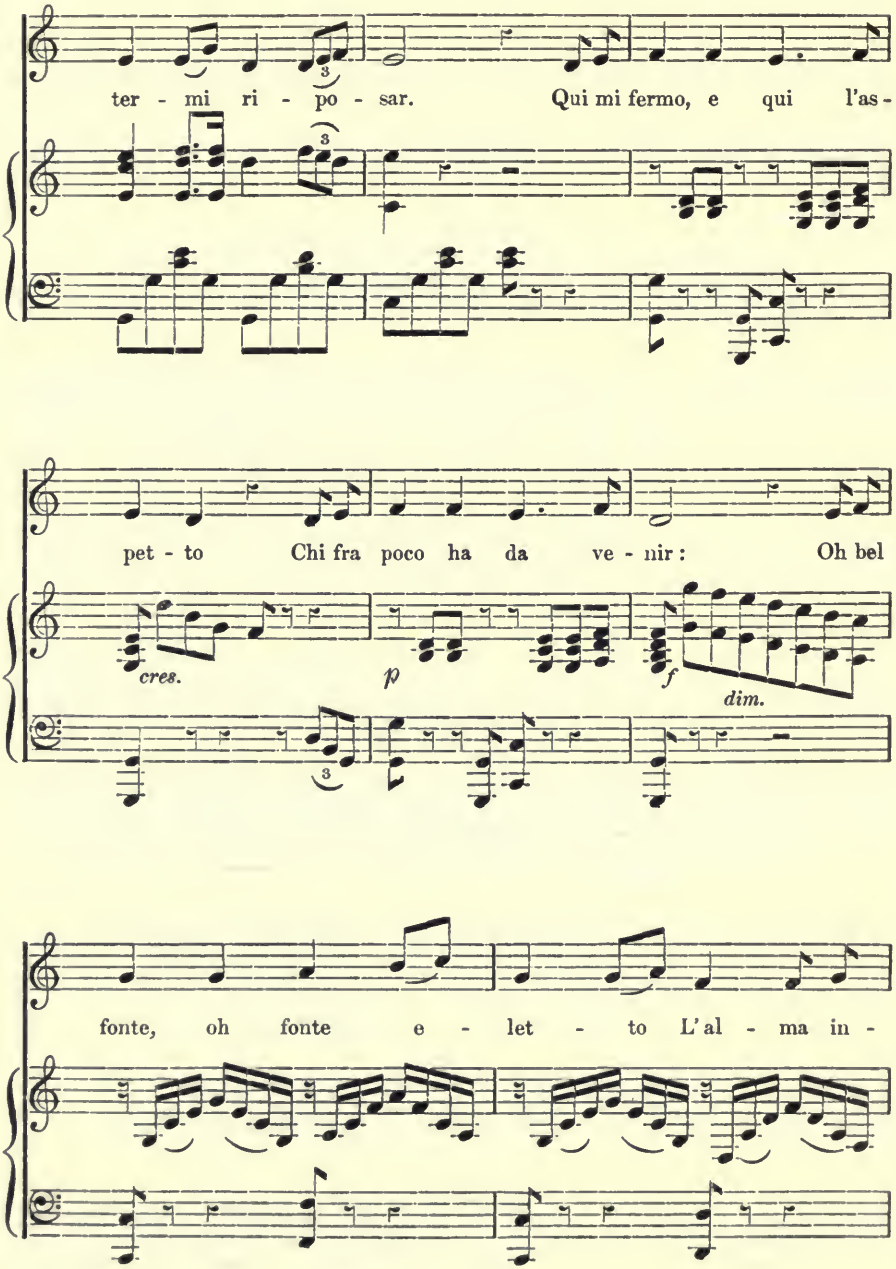
Ed io son nata tra le rose &c.

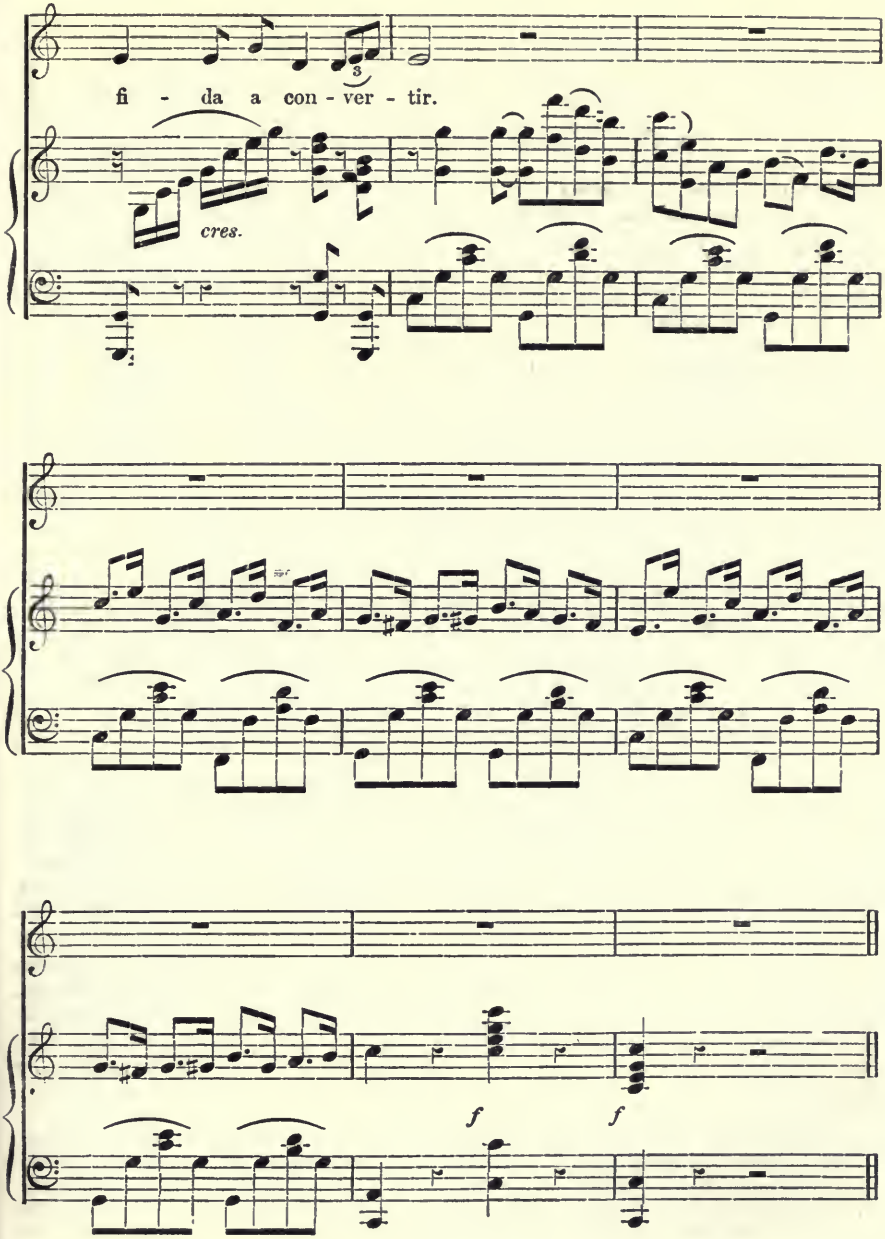
Babbo non vuole,
Ma Mamma nemmeno!
Io piango tanto.
Il Cielo lo sa!

Ed io son nata tra le rose &c

This little song, which I have put here only for its pretty tune, was taught me by Faustina Petrucci of S. Marcello, the sweetest of all the mountain singers. The picture at the top is the piazza in front of the fountain in the piazza of S. Marcello as I saw it from the window where Faustina used to sit and sing to me.


Moderato.
Man-co
mal che stan - co e las - so Dal mio lun - go cam - mi -
nar, Qui ri - tro - vo un poz-zo, un sasso, Da po -


ter - mi ri - po - sar. Qui mi fermo, e qui l'as -
pet - to Chi fra poco ha da ve - nir: Oh bel
cres.
p
f
dim.
fonte, oh fonte e - let - to L'al - ma in -


fi - da a con - ver - tir.
3
cres.
f
f

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE ON HER DRAWING OF OUR LORD AND THE SAMARITAN WOMAN[1]

NEXT (as I have nothing to say about the hermit, whom I did not know, and only took for his venerable appearance), I come to the picture of the Samaritan woman at the well. The face of our Lord, I need hardly say, was drawn without a model, (for where could one find a model for Divinity?) and my own imagination was so altogether indistinct and poor, and yet so much better than my hand could follow, that I passed four days of great distress and anxiety, and became almost ill, trying always and failing always. At last this face was the best I could do, and I was anything but contented; but it brought me a great comfort afterwards, and that is why I speak of it here. After the two figures were both finished, or nearly so, I went out on to a farm where there was a little old well (for there was not room in the picture for a large one), and sat down to draw it. It was a beautiful early spring day, and the path where we sat, Edwige and I, was as white with daisies in some places as if it had been snowing. Pretty soon some of the contadini came up, and asked, in a very polite manner, to see what I was doing. One of them was a very sweet-looking middle-aged woman, with wavy black hair, and a pleasant smile in her dark eyes; and she could not see anything but that one face. They tried to call her attention to one part or another of the picture, but she stood with her eyes fixed on that face, as if she were trying to learn it by heart.

Then some of the others began to say how beautiful it was, and I said: "Only think what the *real* face will be, when we see it in Heaven!" Then she spoke, in a low solemn voice: "I hope we shall all go to Heaven. I do not know whether I shall ever go there, but I hope I shall: it would be very hard to be driven away from the sight of a beautiful face like that." I cannot say how much I was consoled, and yet overpowered by those words. To think that anything done by my hands should have been used to make the woman desire that Presence more than she did before! I was repaid, even though the work had cost me as many years as it had days. And a few days afterwards, when a young countess, belonging to one of the families most celebrated in Florentine history, was looking over the book (a very pretty young lady she was, and as sweet-looking as the contadina—she could not be more so), it seemed to impress her in the same way, and she said: "How I wish I could have that face in my room, to look at when I pray!"

[1] [In the original MS. book, the drawing (here Plate XVIII.) illustrated the "Storia bellissima della Samaritana" (leaves 61–68 in the synopsis, p. 46). The ballad is, says Miss Alexander in her note, "one of the most popular of the Florentine street ballads." Ruskin did not print the ballad; but, in fulfilment of his intention (see above, p. 51), the music of it has here been included among the specimens. "The pretty simple tune was taught me," adds Miss Alexander in her note, "by Ester Fritelli; I have never heard any one else sing it."]

Se sapeste, se sapeste
Chi è colui che ui chiede da ber
Certo a lui richiedereste
Acqua uiua da bever

EDITOR'S NOTE ON IDEALISM

I AM under especial duty to place the above note before the reader, though perhaps not wholly with Miss Alexander's permission, because I have spoken in my own writings with too little belief in ideal conception, and too frequent insistence on the necessity of portraiture.[1] The question is virtually set at rest by these drawings of Francesca's, in which the power of executing her conception has been gained by the exactest portraiture, above which, nevertheless, the idealized countenances always rise, not only in beauty, but even reality. The hermit first spoken of is the one with St. Christopher in the eighteenth drawing of our series.[2]

THE SONG OF THE SHEPHERDS

EDITOR'S PREFACE

I FIND as I proceed with this work that the longer ballads do not represent the character of the peasantry with the clearness of the shorter poems, which are the real expressions of their own hearts: and I have therefore substituted some of them, not originally included in my plan, for the longer historical poems of the Samaritan and St. Christopher. The following Song of the Shepherds well begins for us the expressions, by picture and verse, of nobly gladdened faith in the birth and presence of the Child Jesus, which I have reserved for the close of this volume.

[1] [For the numerous passages bearing on this subject, see General Index under "Idealism" and "Portraiture," and especially *Modern Painters,* vol. ii. sec. i. ch. xiv. and vol. iii. ch. vii. It will be found in these places, however, that Ruskin's view is not essentially inconsistent with what he here says. The true idealism is founded on portraiture, yet attained by a "kind of felicity" and by loving sympathy (Vol. IV. p. 205, and compare Vol. V. p. 113).]

[2] [Now Plate XXII.]

IL CANTO DE' PASTORI

Nell' apparir del sempiterno sole,
Ch' a mezza notte più riluce intorno,
Che l'altro non faria di mezzo giorno,

Cantàro gloria gli Angeli nel Cielo,
E meritaro udir sì dolci accenti,
Pastori che guardavano gli armenti.

Onde là verso l'umil Bettelemme,
Preser la via, dicendo: andiamo un tratto
E sì vedrem questo mirabil fatto.

Quivi trovàro in vil panni involto,
Il Fanciul, con Giuseppe e con Maria,
O benedetta e nobil compagnia!

Giunt' i pastori all' umile presepe,
Di stupor pieni e d'alta maraviglia,
L'un verso l'altro fissaron le ciglia.

Poi cominciaron vicendevolmente,
Con boscherecce e semplici parole,
Lieti a cantar finchè nascesse il sole.

Primo Pastore

Io, caro amico, alla capanna mia,
Vorrei condurlo, ch' è lontano poco,
Dove nè cibo mancherà nè fuoco.

Secondo Pastore

Ed io per certo alla città reale
Con frettolosi passi porterollo,
Stretto alle braccia ed attaccato al collo.

THE SONG OF THE SHEPHERDS *

At the first rising of the eternal Sun,
Which shone at midnight with a brighter ray,
Than ever shone the other at mid-day,

The angels sang God's glory in the sky:
Some shepherds, watching by their flocks were found,
Worthy to hear that sweet and heavenly sound.

Then unto Bethlehem, poor and humble town,
Hastened the shepherds, eager to behold
That wondrous sight of which the angels told.

In linen wrapped the Holy Infant lies;
Mary and Joseph, kneeling, Him adore:
Such noble company ne'er met before.

About that lowly bed the shepherds stand,
Silent at first with awe and great surprise,
And gaze astonished in each other's eyes.

Till, joy to awe succeeding, they began,
With rustic melody and simple rhyme,
To sing alternate till the morning time.

First Shepherd

My cottage would be better than this shed,
And 'tis not far; Him thither will I bear,
For neither food nor fire is wanting there.

Second Shepherd

The royal city were a fitter place:
I'll take Him there, my cloak shall Him enfold:
Close to my heart, He will not feel the cold.

* The Shepherds' serenade is taken from the *Corona di Sacre Canzoni*, but is more fanciful and full of conceits than are the rest of those simple old Hymns. With all its oddity it appears to me singularly devout, tender and beautiful. The last four verses (which lose sadly in the translation) might almost be by an Italian George Herbert; but the name of the unambitious author is forgotten. (F.)

Primo

Le piccole sue man mi porrò in seno;
E coi sospiri miei le membra sue,
Scalderò piu che l'asinello e'l bue.

Secondo

Ed io vuo' pianger si dirottamente,
Ch' empia di calde lagrime un catino,
Dove si bagri il tenero Bambino.

Primo

Io vuo' tor meco un poco di quel fieno,
Ch' egli ha d'intorno, e non avro paura,
D'orso, o di lupo, o d'altra ria ventura.

Secondo

Ed io del latte, onde ha la faccia aspersa,
Prender vorrei, se non ch' io ne pavento,
E conservarlo in un vasel d'argento.

Primo

Io vuo' pregarlo con pietosa voce;
Signor, perdona li peccati miei!
Che perciò credo che venuto sei.

Secondo

Ed io vuo' dirgli baldanzosamente;
Facciamo a cambio, Tu mi dona il Cielo,
Ed io ti presto questo piccol velo.

Primo

Io non vuò' chieder, nè Città, nè Regni;
Ma solo dirgli, con un dolce riso,
Sia ben venuto il Re del Paradiso!

Secondo

Ed io vuò' gir per l'universo mondo,
Fino nell' Indie, gridando sempre mai;
Dio s'è fatt' uomo, e tu meschin nol sai.

First

His little hands should in my bosom hide:
My sighs, I think, at least might warm Him more,
Than breath of ox or ass had done before.

Second

I, if I might, would bathe Him in hot tears,
Which from my eyes do plenteously flow,
As I behold Him lying there so low!

First

Oh let me take a little of the hay
On which He lies, and wear it for a charm:
No bear or wolf would ever do me harm.

Second

That drop of milk that lingers on His lip
I'd reverently gather, did I dare,
And sealed in silver casket would it wear.

First

I would kneel down and piteously say,
O Lord, have mercy and my sins forgive!
For that is what He came for, I believe.

Second

I would speak boldly, let us now exchange.
Lord, I do give this little veil to Thee,
And Thou wilt Heaven one day give to me.

First

I will ask nothing; let me be the first
To say, although with voice of little worth,
O King of Heaven, welcome to our earth!

Second

And I would travel all the wide world o'er,
From here to India, telling as I go
How God has come to dwell with man below.

THE GOLDEN GIRDLE

(CINTURINO D'ORO)[1]

Son piccolina, non ho che quindici anni,
E son segnata al libro dell' amore;
M' hanno levato i miei puliti panni,
E m' hanno messo un vestito da bruno.
Vestito nero e cinturin d'argento,
Amane uno e lass' andarne cento.
Vestito nero e cinturino d'oro
Lassa andar cento ed amane uno solo.

I am young and little;—only just fifteen,
Yet in Love's book my name is written down.
They have taken off my maiden garments' sheen,
And put me on to-day my bridal gown.
"Black gown and silver girdle," so they say,
"Love one, and let a hundred go their way,"
"Black gown, and golden girdle," say to me,
"Love only one, and let a hundred be."

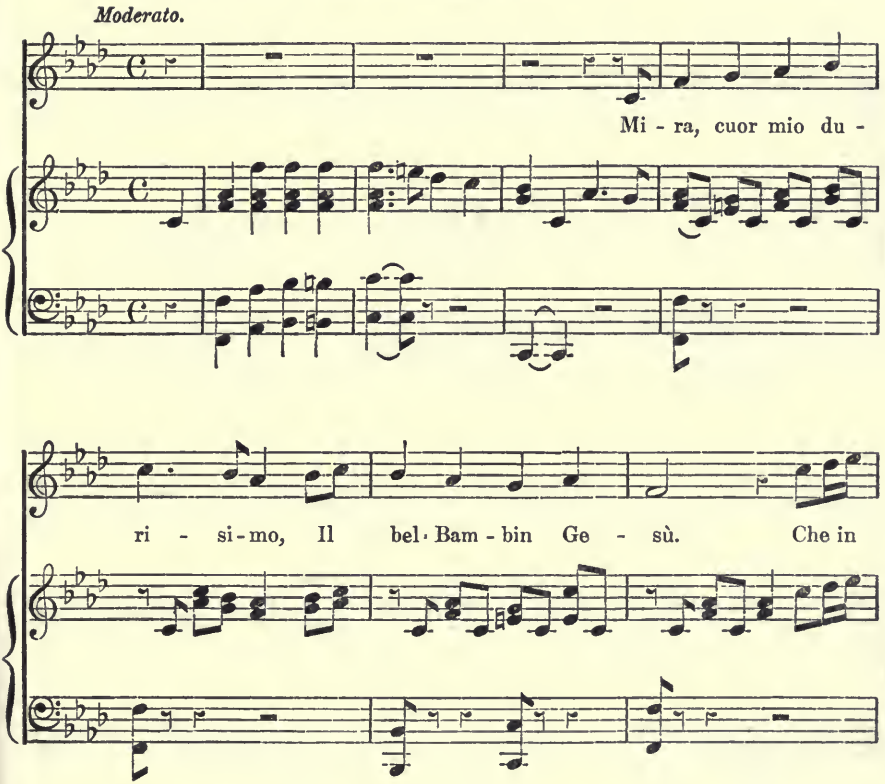
TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

This rispetto alludes to the dress, which, as many old people can remember, was once worn by Contadine brides near Florence. It consisted of a black silk dress with a golden girdle: the hair was dressed in a knot, and covered with a scarlet net, to which was attached a long golden ribbon, falling down on the shoulder; and a pearl necklace and earrings completed the costume. On the Sunday *preceding* the wedding, the bride was expected to appear at church in a gown of fine woollen, with *silver* girdle and ribbon. These ornaments were afterwards kept to be worn in religious processions, or on other grand occasions. As the old lady says who has just dictated to me these particulars, and who is now sitting beside me while I write, "There were beautiful brides in those days, and *no danger of mistaking a contadina for an artisan.*" The bride on her wedding day was accompanied by all the married women of both families, wearing their own wedding dresses; only the bride's mother stayed away, as the occasion was considered too trying for her feelings.

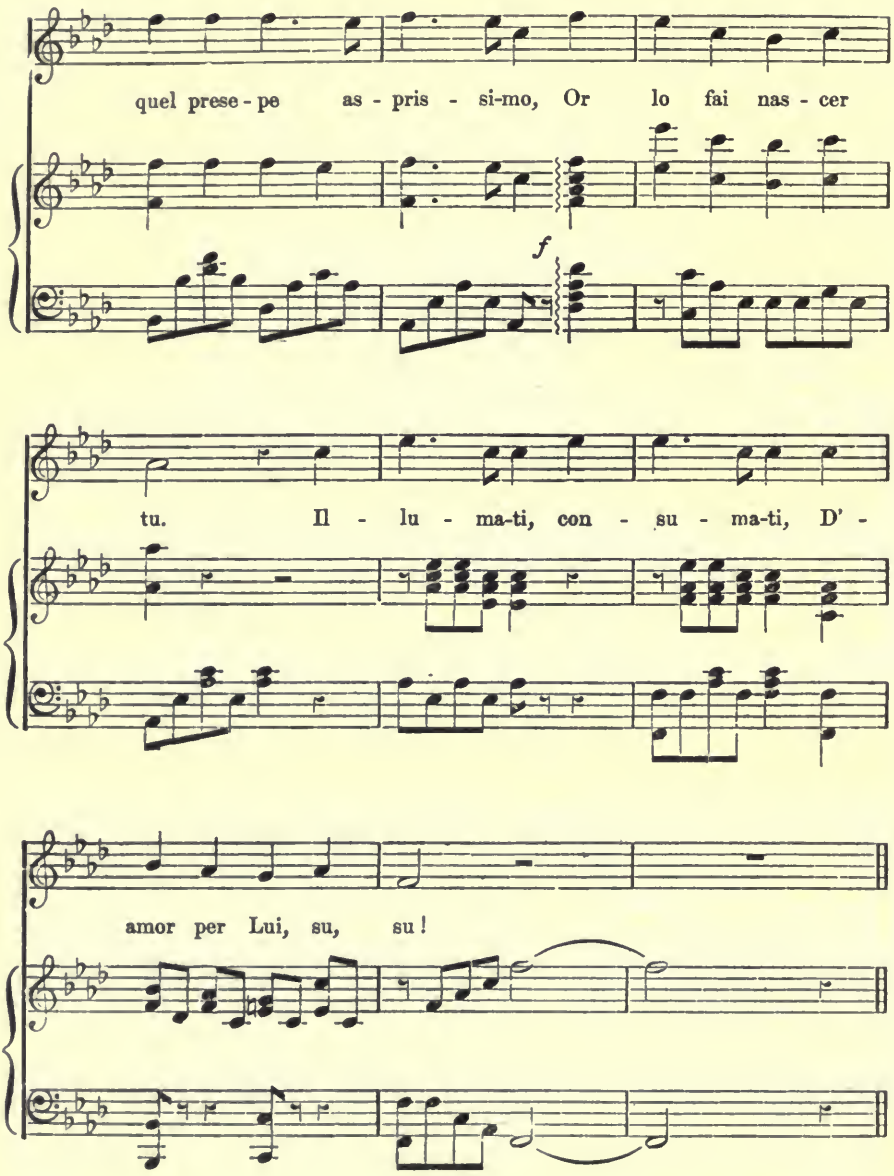
[1] [No. 306 in Tigri's collection.]

BEHOLD, MY HEART[1]

(MIRA, CUOR MIO)



[1] [This song, headed "Old Hymn for Christmas," stands first in the original MS. book (leaves 5 and 6 in the synopsis, p. 45). Miss Alexander appends the following note: "This hymn, and the one following ("Gesù Amore," not given by Ruskin), are taken from the *Corona di Sacre Canzoni,* a collection of popular hymns, printed in Florence in the year 1710, by Cesare Bindi."]


quel prese - pe as - pris - si-mo, Or lo fai nas - cer
f
tu. Il - lu - ma-ti, con - su - ma-ti, D' -
amor per Lui, su, su!

Thou sleepest oh beloved... But Thy heart
Sleeps not, but watches still where'er Thou art.
Oh Lamb Divine! if ever Thy thoughts
could see.....
I think... He says... Then I shall die for thee.

Shall die for me! O God, and what am I
And what my love, in face of love so high?
Come Mary, on thy heart thy Jesus hold,
And love Him now, the more our love grows cold!

Tu dormi oh dolce amor, ma intanto il cuore
Non dorme no ma sveglia a tutte l'ore.
Oh mio bello e puro agnello
A che pensi Pimmi Tu
Oh Amore immenso!
A morire per te, risponde, io penso.

Ed a morir per me Tu pensi, oh Dio
E ch'altro amare fuor di Te pos'io?
Oh Maria speranza mia
S'io poc'amo il tuo Gesù
Non ti sdegnare!
Amalo tu per me, s'io non so amare.

(THE LAST SONG OF IDA[1])

Mira, cuor mio durissimo,
Il bel Bambin Gesù.
Che in quel presepe asprissimo,
Or lo fai nascer tu.
Illumati, consumati,
D'amor per Lui, su, su!

Behold, my heart, the Babe divine,
This night, He left the skies.
And born on earth for sins of thine,
In that rough manger lies.
Canst thou behold, and yet be cold?
Or look with careless eyes?

Per vestir te di gloria
Guarda, che ignudo Ei sta!
Per farti aver vittoria
Scende a combatter già
Festeggialo, corteggialo,
Vedi, per te che fa!

And see, He naked lies, that thou
Shouldst walk in garments white.
To make thee conqueror, even now,
He comes to toil, and fight.
With welcome sweet His coming greet,
And sing His praise to-night.

Per farti l'alma accendere,
Patisce freddo or qui.
E per far te risplendere,
Fra l'ombre Ei comparì
Deh, amalo; deh, bramalo!
S' Egli t'amò cosi.

He came in winter's frost and cold,
That thou shouldst warmèd be.
That heavenly light should thee enfold,
In midnight shades came He.
Come, meet Him here, with love sincere,
For much hath He loved thee.

Per farti al Ciel risorgere,
Sul fieno Ei si posò:
Sol per gioia a te porgere
Ei pianse e lagrimò.
Ringrazia sua grazia
Che tanti ti donò!

To lead thee home above the sky,
He on the hay must sleep.
To give thee joy, thy tears to dry,
Himself will mourn and weep.
Give thanks with fear, it cost so dear
Thy soul from death to keep!

Per poner te fra gli Angeli
Tra gli animale or è,
Chi d' Angeli e d' Arcangeli
E sommo eterno Re.
Onoralo! Adoralo!
Sempre con viva fè.

That thou should'st dwell where angels sing,
Between the beasts He lay,
Who of Archangels is the King,
Whom heavenly hosts obey.
With living faith, in life and death,
Adore His love alway!

[1] [See *The Story of Ida;* above, p. 32. The two last verses of the song are here added from a leaf of the original MS. book; 7 in the synopsis (p. 45). The Plate (XIX.) which Ruskin here inserted contains part of the "Christmas Hymn of Fiumalbo" (now added, pp. 246, 247 below), with regard to which Miss Alexander notes on one leaf of the original book: "I have never been able to find out anything about the origin of this beautiful little hymn, but it seems to be sung all over Italy. Even at Asiago in the Tyrol I found it printed in the end of an old prayer-book with a few other hymns of inferior beauty." And on another leaf: "Perhaps this hymn may not be Tuscan, though I thought it was when I wrote it down here, and it is certainly a common one in Tuscany. It loses a great deal in the translation."]

THE STORY OF EMILIA AND HER SISTER

I WANT to tell, before I go any farther, about something that happened in Edwige's family, because then I can tell about two such dear little children, and how they lived; and I think it is a more interesting story than any of the others that I have left. After poor Assunta* was taken away, her husband, to the dismay of his children, chose after a very short time to marry a young widow with two children. She was younger than any of his own children, and the wonder was that she should have wished to marry him; but he was a handsome, agreeable man, and earning good wages, and she was poor, and had been obliged to go to service, so that, at first, her condition really seemed to be improved by the marriage, more particularly as he took one of her children, and her first husband's relations took the other. However, she did not find her condition improved when her husband died, as he did before long, and left her with another baby; and everybody said that it was all her own fault, and nobody seemed to pity her much, excepting Edwige. So, after living from hand to mouth for a long time, being in great want, she finally took service with a family in Florence, hiring a room outside of Porta Romana for the two little children.

One very cold day in the winter, as I was sitting at work in my room, one of the servants came to the door, looking very much puzzled, and said: "There are two little girls downstairs at the street door, and—I think I do not quite understand what they mean—it seems to me that one of them says she is Edwige's sister." No wonder the man could not understand; she was younger than some of Edwige's grandchildren! Edwige started up, dropping her knitting-work, and ran downstairs. A little later she re-appeared, bringing with her two such poor little children, one of eleven and the other of four years old; and, as she led them into the room, she said, laying her hand affectionately on the shoulder of the youngest, "This is my little sister!" They were both pretty children, but dressed in thin and scanty clothes, which had evidently been worn out by some one else before they came to them, and had been washed till the colour was all gone, and mended until they would bear mending no longer. They both wore somebody else's cast-off shoes: those of the elder child too small for her, those of the younger much too large—both pair so ragged that they would hardly hold together. And their poor little icy-cold hands were covered with chilblains; and in that condition, on one of the coldest days in the year, the little creatures had walked in from two miles outside Porta Romana! Of course the first thing was to warm and feed them; we made them sit down by our fire. The eldest, Emilia, drew the little one into the same large chair with herself, and sat with her arm about her, looking perfectly happy. And then I asked them much about their life, and I found that they were really living all alone

* Edwige's mother: see "Story of Edwige," p. 169; not to be confused with Fortunato's Assunta, p. 147. [J. R.]

and keeping house by themselves. Emilia acted as mother to the little one, washed and dressed her, and took care of their one room; and spent all her advanced* time in braiding straw, by which she earned a few centesimi. The *real* mother came to see them once a week, and brought them what money she could. But I think no child ever had such a gentle and devoted little mother as Emilia was to the little Raffaellina. She fed her before she would eat herself, standing over her and giving her a mouthful at a time, stroking her hair, and calling her all sorts of affectionate names when she looked at her,—her face all lighted up in a manner that made her for the moment as beautiful as a Madonna, though she did not know it; and when, after much coaxing, she induced the shy little creature to come up and give me a kiss, I could see that she felt she was conferring a great pleasure on me. I asked how Raffaellina, who was lame with chilblains, and scuffled about sadly in her great ragged shoes, had been able to walk so far; and was told that Emilia had carried her much of the way in her arms. When they left, Emilia, who appeared overcome with gratitude for the meal and the seat by the fire, said they would pray for me that night before they went to bed. I asked her to pray for the recovery of my father, who was ill at the time; and she answered very earnestly, "I will pray that he may live longer than I!" I told her she must not pray for that, because my father was an old man, and it would be the same as praying to die before her time; and then she said, "At least I will pray that he may live quite as long as I do." Now as they were going away I remembered that a good American lady had lately given me some money to spend for the poor, and I felt certain that I should find no one any poorer than these little children; so I asked Edwige to take them with her and buy them some warm clothes, and some shoes and stockings, which she did. And she told me afterwards that when they parted, little Emilia, after trying in vain to express her thanks to her own satisfaction, finally said, "*Now I will* pray the Lord to make the Signorina's father live longer than I shall; and I do not care if it *does* make me die a little sooner!"

Emilia is now nearly seventeen, and, as the family where her mother lived as servant has moved away from Florence, the mother and daughters are all once more living together; and Raffaellina goes to a nuns' school, where they are kind to her, and give her her dinner every day, and teach her to do beautiful sewing and embroidery. But poor Emilia—she is one of those who never live long—for the two past years has been gradually fading away with a sort of slow decline. The doctor has told her now that her life cannot be long, and she is very ready and happy to go. She is still able, on warm days, to sit outside the door with her straw braid. At Easter the priest proposed that he should bring her the communion, but she said she should so like to go to the church once more; and she did go there, taking a few steps at a time and resting between. She is very careful that Raffaellina should not eat from her plate, nor do anything else which she thinks might put her in danger of taking the complaint. "Not," she says, "that I think it a hard thing to die, but I do not want her to have a long illness such as I have had."

* Spare time: but see footnote on p. 204 for subsequent use of the term. [J. R.]

THE STORY OF GEMIGNANO AMIDEI

In one of the pictures of S. Zita (the one where she is giving bread to some poor people at the door[1]), the old man leaning against the side of the door and holding out his hat, is Gemignano Amidei, who can tell more, perhaps, about old times in that wild country, than any one else living. He has been, himself, afflicted beyond the usual lot of humanity, having seen all his family taken away before him. And such a beautiful family as he had, when I first knew him! His eldest daughter, poor Angelina, whom I never saw more than once, went to service, and died young, away from home. The other daughter, poor Maddalena, a most beautiful girl, indeed the acknowledged beauty of all that part of the country, was to have married a distant relation, the eldest son in the wealthiest of all the contadino families. She went to the Maremma one winter with his family, and they made her work beyond her strength: her business was to follow the sheep, and I was told by another relation that they used to make her wade through the streams on the way, carrying two or three lambs at once. She was attacked by Maremma fever, and no care was taken of her for some time: at last they sent her home, and she broke down on the journey, and died at Cutigliano, only eight miles from her father's house. Soon after this, Gemignano's wife, Agatina, was missing from the doorway where, year after year, I had seen her sitting with her distaff. Perhaps she could not survive her beautiful daughter, and she followed her soon. Then Gemignano had only his son left, a strong, very handsome young man, whom I knew only by sight, but others told me that he was good and industrious and kind-hearted, and altogether a most lovable character. He was married, and had three pretty little children. One day he was out cutting trees, and a friend who was with him at work, and was cutting a fir-tree, said: "Stand away, this tree is going to fall!" And he said: "Keep on cutting, it will not fall where I am; I know more about cutting trees than you do!" And those were the last words that ever he spoke. The tree fell, and he fell under it. They took him up insensible, and carried him into a house near by, where he breathed for a few hours, but died before the evening, without ever recovering enough to recognise his father and wife and children, who all came to him.

And so poor old Gemignano was left alone, with the burden of the little family on his hands; the young widow, who was at first half distracted, and four small children—for a little girl was born soon after her father died. *And the old man, who is now eighty, works for them all.** In

* Oh—faithless reader!—will you yet say the story of St. Christopher is untrue? [J. R.]

[1] [Plate IV.]

the summer he carries beams on his shoulders, from the woods where they are cut to the road where they are loaded; but he is no longer strong enough for such heavy work, it hurts his chest, and he cannot do more than half a day's work at a time. Half a franc is as much as he can earn. But they own the little house, and Teresa, the widow, goes out washing, or to work by the day on the farms, and the little boys go for wood; and they have a little help from one and another, and so they live from day to day, never knowing for long beforehand how they are going to live.

LA FOGLIA DEL GRANO

(THE LEAVES OF MAIZE)[1]

Fossi sicuro l'amor mio sentisse,
Ad alta voce io vorrei cantare.
Ma ci hanno separato valli e monti,
Questa mia voce non ci puole arrivare.
Ci hanno separato la foglia del grano,
E non mi può sentir, perch' è lontano.
Ci ha separato la foglia dell' uva
E non mi può sentir da casa sua.
Ci ha separato la foglia dell' oppo,
E non mi può sentir, lontan è troppo.

Oh, I would sing aloud, if I but knew
That while I'm singing, one I love could hear;
But hills and vales and mountains part us two,
The song, though sweet, can never reach her ear.
And we are parted by the fields of grain;
She cannot hear me, I may sing in vain.
The vines, with wandering shade, between us are;
She cannot hear me from her window far.
And we are parted by the poplars green;
She cannot hear the whispering leaves between.

[1] [This is one of the Rispetti not included in Miss Alexander's original MS. book. It is No. 38 in Tigri's collection.]

THE STORY OF TERESA AND PETRUCCI

Now, passing by the pilgrim in the picture of St. Zita at the well,[1] a man of whom I know nothing, I come to the picture[2] which represents a *Christian in affliction*,* and is an illustration to the hymn:

"Quasi neve che al sole si strugge."

The hymn did not exactly suggest any picture, so I thought I would put in a likeness of Pietro Petrucci, who is certainly, I think, a Christian, and one of the most afflicted whom I ever knew. It is not very much, though, that I have to tell about him. He is a stone-mason who lives at Pian Sinatico, a little village about four miles below l'Abetone, on the Tuscan side. He has a brother who is a farmer, and the two brothers married two sisters, Barbara and Teresa, who look exactly alike, and both have the excitable, sensitive, affectionate and rather poetical character which is not uncommon among the mountain people, and which I have already described in the story of Metilde Seghi.[3] Pietro and his wife Teresa never had any children, and as he was a good workman, and every one liked him, he always had plenty to do, and earned more than was needed to supply their very moderate wants. In course of time he laid by enough to buy, (besides his house and little garden) a piece of waste ground, from which, working in his advanced † time, he cleared away the stones and thistles, and finally made a good field of it, where he raises beans, potatoes, etc. And Teresa used to go out nursing, and was considered a great authority in all cases of sickness. So they were quite prosperous people, and very much respected by all their neighbours. But about nine or ten years ago—I cannot tell exactly the time, though I remember very well when it happened—poor Teresa was taken ill, and some mysterious trouble attacked her eyes, which became inflamed, and began to lose their sight. Pietro, who had no one in the world to care for excepting his wife, was almost beside himself with distress: he took her to Bologna to see one Professor, and to Pistoja to see another; he

* Not given in this book, but I could not omit its story. [J. R.]

† After hours, Francesca means, I think, or before them, in the early morning. [J. R.]

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[1] [Plate VII.]

[2] [On leaf 99 of the original MS. book (see the synopsis, p. 46). The drawing shows a poor man seated in a bare room. The hymn which it illustrates is entitled "Sulla Felicita di patire per Gesù" ("On the happiness of suffering for Jesus"). "This hymn of a Christian in affliction," says Miss Alexander in her note in the MS. book, "is from the *Corona di Sacre Canzoni*."]

[3] [See above, pp. 136–139.]

tried every remedy that any one would suggest, he spent all his money and went in debt for more,—and the poor woman went blind after all! "I have ruined myself with Professors," he said to me, "but I would not mind that, if it were not that they made her suffer so much, and then did her no good after all!" Having finally given up all hope, he has devoted his life ever since to the sole object of making her as happy as he can in her darkness. In old times, before their misfortune, he used often to go and work away from home, and sometimes he would stay for several days, and so he was constantly earning money; but now he will never leave Teresa on any account. He contents himself with doing what work he can find to do in the neighbourhood of Pian Sinatico, whether for high wages or low; and when there is no building going on, he goes to cut trees, or to load logs, or anything else, so only that he does not have to go away from Teresa. In the morning, before he goes to work, he makes the polenta, and fills the water-pitcher, and puts the house in order (doing all a woman's work), and then he leads her to her chair, and gives her her distaff and the wool—for she can spin without seeing—and arranges the polenta, and anything else there is to eat—when there is anything else—on the table within reach of her hand; and then he tries to find some friend who will come and sit with her, at least part of the time while he is away. And then he goes to his work; but I think he always counts the minutes until he is with her again. On Sundays, or in the evening, he reads to her, if any one will lend him a book; but there are very few books at Pian Sinatico. His thought for her runs into everything: I do not think it can be accidental, that in his little garden he plants none but sweet-scented flowers, which of course are the only ones she can enjoy. He does not care for the hollyhocks and sunflowers which please his neighbours, but he has plenty of lavender and other sweet herbs, and sweet-william, and the most beautiful sweet roses that are anywhere to be found. In the season when these are in blossom, the whole house is filled with the perfume. Teresa feels her misfortune very heavily, as is usually the case with those who go blind late in life, and it makes her very helpless: still, she is pretty resigned. She still retains her place as medical adviser to the whole settlement: indeed, the neighbours generally come to her for counsel and sympathy in every case of sickness or misfortune, of whatever nature. But in all the years since this trouble came upon them, as Pietro has not been able to earn so much money as he did when he used to travel about, he has never succeeded in paying his debt,—the debt that he made when all the different medical professors were trying experiments on poor Teresa. And now the man who lent him the money to pay all those people for what was of no use, says that he cannot wait any longer, and it must be paid this summer. So Pietro thinks he shall have to sell his land, the field that he worked so hard to buy, and harder still to make fit for cultivation. He and his wife will be much poorer after that, and I can see that he has a heavy anxiety on his mind. But he is very patient, and never speaks about his troubles unless I ask him some question. There is only one terror that he cannot look in the face, and that he tries always to keep out of his mind: the fear that he may die before Teresa!

EDITOR'S NOTE ON THE DRAWING OF ST. CHRISTOPHER AND THE KING

Of the five drawings with which Miss Alexander has illustrated the legend of St. Christopher, the four given to Oxford,[1] and photographed in the terminal numbers of this book, are without any debate the most beautiful and true designs that have ever yet been made out of all the multitude by which alike the best spiritual and worldly powers of Art have commended to Christendom its noblest monastic legend. The perfect feeling and deep solemnity of those four designs were, in the Oxford series, better left, it seemed to me, in their serenity, without the mingling of feebler interest in the prefatory drawing. But I make the series here complete, first, as showing the rise of the whole conception in Francesca's mind; and, secondly, because this drawing gives an especially interesting example of the exultation in lovely detail which is common to all sincere, happy, and perfectly gifted religious artists. The established rules of conventional piety dressed angels in flannel, and saints in sable; but Angelico spends day after day in enamelling their wings, and Carpaccio sometimes blinds us to St. George with the gold of his armour, or loses the Queen of Sheba in the pattern of her brocade. Nor could this book have sufficiently represented the simplicity of cheerfulness, which has made Francesca's companionship so precious to the poor, unless this design had shown her sympathy with all that is brightest and minutest in the dress alike of the earth and its inhabitants—alike in the gemmed coruscation of the King's crown, the grace of the dancing grass, and the fringed flame of the wayside knapweed.

Instead of the withdrawn ballad,[2] I will ask Francesca to tell us, in next number, the story of St. Christopher in her own words.

[1] [As stated in *The Art of England*, § 87 (Vol. XXXIII.). Compare *ibid.* § 85, where Ruskin similarly refers to the drawings. The four given to Oxford (which appeared in Parts VIII.–X. of *Roadside Songs*) are here Plates XXI.–XXIV.; the remaining one of the series is Plate XX.]

[2] [On leaves 46–57 of the original MS. book, "Story of the Glorious Cavalier of Christ, Saint Christopher": see synopsis, p. 45.]

At such a name the King upraised his hand,
And signed a cross full humbly on his brow.
The cavalier, who did not understand,
For he was still a heathen, even now,
Drew near the King, and softly did demand:
I pray thee master then wilt tell me how,
When Satan's name occurs, thou dost not fail
To make some sign, while all thy face grows pale.

The King, who did with kindness overflow,
Made answer, now dear Christopher attend:
That sign was left behind, if thou would'st know,
By my dear Lord, my Saviour, my best friend.
My weapon t'is, and Satan is the foe
From whom I hope my spirit to defend.
But great his strength is, greater yet his art,
And more than death he doth affright my heart.

La mano in fronte subito ponea,
Col segno della croce si segnava.
Il saggio Re Cristofano vedea
Ma non sapendo quel che denotava,
Che il lume della Fede non avea,
Si accostò al Re, e così addimandava:
Cosa vuol dir, Signor, quando sentite
Tal nome, vi segnate, e impallidite?

Rispose il Re, ch'era pien di bontade,
Sa perch'io m'armo, Cristofano mio,
Del segno che Gesù per sua pietade,
Lascio qui in Terra, l'amoroso Iddio!
Che il rio Demonio con la sua falsitade,
Si disperda e da me vada in oblio.
Son tante le sue insidie, e di tal sorte,
Teme gl'inganni suoi più che la morte.

SULLA BELL' ALTURA

(THE PALACE ON HIGH)[1]

In alto, in alto, vo' farmi un palazzo,
In alto, in alto, sulla bell' altura!
Intorno, intorno, vo' stendere un laccio
A tradimento, per tradir la luna.
A tradimento per tradir le stelle,
Perchè restai tradito dalle belle.
A tradimento, per tradir il sole,
Perchè restai tradito nell' amore.

On high, on high, my palace I will rear,
On the high mountain let me build it soon!
With snares about it, stretching far and near,
With cords of treachery, to entice the moon.
With cords to catch the stars, and make them fall,
Since fairest things to me were traitors all.
With cords deceitful, to entrap the sun,
Since love with treachery has my life undone.

QUANDO LA STELLA

(WHEN THE STAR)

E quando partirò da questa terra,
Saran contenti i nemici mia.
O ch'io vada per mar, o sia per terra,
Per avvisarti manderò una stella.
Quando la stella sarà giunt' al prato,
Prega per me, che sono ammalato.
Quando la stella sarà giunt' in via,
Prega per me, che son in agonia.
Quando la stella sarà fatta chiara,
Prega per me, che sono nella bara.

When I shall die, and dwell on earth no more,
At which my enemies content will be;
Where'er death find me, if on sea or shore,
I'll send a star to tell the news to thee.
When first by yonder field the star you see,
Then know that I am sick, and pray for me.
And when the star has reached the road near by,
Then pray for me, I am about to die.
And when the star grows large, and bright as day,
Then pray for me, for I have passed away.

[1] [No. 1128 in Tigri's collection.]

THE STORY OF BEATRICE AND HER SONS

(Part of this story has already been quoted in the sixth lecture of the *Art of England*,[1] but it is right that in this book it should be read unbroken.)

Of Beatrice of Pian degli Ontani, whose portrait stands at the beginning of the book, I have written a little account in the preface, but there are many more things which I should like to tell about her. Of her eight children (of whom five are now living) two were poets. Of the youngest of these, Angelo, I shall have something to tell farther on.

Poor Beppe, the eldest, whom I never knew, inherited his mother's peculiar gift, and was an improvisatore; and when he and his mother sang together, (that is, alternately, keeping up a conversation in verse, she singing one ottava and he answering it with another, after the fashion of mountain poets,) it is said by those who had the good fortune to hear them, to have been a thing never to be forgotten.

Beppe was more like twin brother than son to Beatrice; they were so much alike, in their difference from the rest of the world, that they could understand each other as no one else could understand them. He had, besides the poetical gift, extraordinary beauty, strength, and courage; and *he never, in anything, gave a sorrow to his parents until he left them.** But when the sorrow did come, it was such as few, I hope, have to bear in this world.

He had been employed, with some other young men of the place, in charcoal burning; and his companions amused themselves by seeing how heavy burdens he could carry, as he was stronger than any of the others. At last they made a bet that he would not be able to carry three bags of charcoal, weighing two hundred Italian pounds each, up a steep ascent where (as Beatrice said when she told me the story) "a mule could not have gone." He won the bet, but it cost him his life.

He broke a blood-vessel, and was only just able to reach his home, where he took to his bed, and died in a few days. If I remember rightly, he was only twenty-two years old. With Beppe's loss the light seemed to go out of Beatrice's life, and she never, she told me, could sing so well again.

Still she bore her loss with wonderful courage. It is her habit, when

* This form of virtue, observe, is wholly inbred, not taught; it is pure "human nature" in its noblest races, and the most intellectual and refined examples of them. [J. R.]

[1] [This is not quite accurate. What is quoted in the third (not sixth) lecture of the *Art of England* is part, not of this account of Beatrice, but of the earlier account in Miss Alexander's Preface (see above, p. 57).]

telling of anything that has happened to her, to end her story always with the words "Grazie a Dio!" And as I noticed that she said those words just the same when she told of a trouble as when she spoke of a good fortune, (while yet, from the tone of her voice, I knew it was not an empty form of words with her,) I asked her the reason, and she said, "We must thank the Lord most when He sends us trouble, because that is when He loves us best."

Beatrice was sometimes treated with great honour. I remember one day, when she came over to l'Abetone to see the giostra of S. Pellegrino,—— But before I tell of her visit, I ought to tell what the giostra is.[1] It is a sort of theatrical performance, carried on in the open air, and usually representing the life of some saint, or other religious subject. Some beautiful place is always chosen for the giostra, where the ground has a little the form of an amphitheatre, and the spectators sit or stand on the grass, while the performers *sing* the words to a peculiar, and, it is said, very ancient chant, with an accompaniment of violin and violoncello. With those strong mountain voices, every word can be distinguished at a great distance.

Now, as I was saying, Beatrice had come to see the giostra, and had been listening to it with great interest from our window. It was over, and the great crowd of excited people flowed back from the field into the road, the singers among them in odd costumes of their own invention. When they caught sight of Beatrice, they all gathered under the window, and called earnestly for an ottava. She extended her hand, and instantly every sound was hushed, the crowded road was as still as any solitude, while she sang, in her clear beautiful voice, two or three ottave, in which she expressed her admiration of the giostra and the singers.[2] All I can remember now is that she said the Pope himself might have learnt something more of Christian doctrine if he had seen that giostra.

A few minutes later, as she passed through the crowd on her way home, a man met her with a glass of wine, and, bowing respectfully, said, "I want the greatest poet of our mountain to drink from my hand." Without speaking, she stooped and drank from the glass which he held, touching it only with her lips. The grace with which they both went through this ceremony has remained always in my mind.

At this time Beatrice used generally to wear the old-fashioned contadina dress in which I took her likeness:[3] a scarlet bodice, blue handkerchief, garnet necklace, and gold ear-rings; her long linen sleeves were ruffled at the wrist; when about her work she used to push them above her elbows, as I drew them. On grand occasions she would wear a white embroidered veil, handkerchief, and apron, all of which she had when she was married. No picture can give an idea of her beauty, because it is impossible to represent the light in her eyes, which seemed always to come from within, and not from without. Whenever I see the sun shining into deep water, it always makes me think of Beatrice's eyes; they were more like that than anything else.

[1] [See also above, p. 138. For a detailed account of the *giostra*, see pp. lvi. *seq.* in the Preface to Tigri's *Canti Popolari Toscani* (1869).]

[2] [For a reference to "the effect on her audience of Beatrice's ottave," see *Præterita*, i. § 171.]

[3] [Plate II.; above, p. 38.]

Though they call her Beatrice of Pian degli Ontani, she really lives at Pian di Novello, a mile or two away from the little village that gives her its name. But I ought to say that a *plain*, in that part of the country, means only a piece of ground where any one can walk without extreme danger of slipping off. Her house is in the valley of the Sestaione, and if there is any place in the world more beautiful than that valley, I never saw it. It is all shut in by high steep mountains, partly wooded, partly rising in great walls of rock, with beeches and alders clinging wherever they can find anything to cling to, and, where there is not enough earth for these, wild roses, blackberry vines, and all sorts of mountain flowers, growing in the very cracks of the stones. The bottom of the valley is full of broken rocks, which have fallen or been washed down from the mountains in spring; and over and among these the little river Sestaione goes down to join the Lima, in a succession of green pools and white cascades. The sun shines very warm in that narrow valley, for all it is so high; and strawberries grow everywhere, even between the stones in the middle of the stream; and in the summer days, when I went there, the air was all scented with the "Life everlasting"* (as we call it in America), and there was no sound but the sound of the water, and the occasional humming of a bee; and there were so many butterflies and other little bright-coloured noiseless creatures, busy among the flowers. On one side of the valley is Beatrice's farm, in a place where the hill is not so steep; and her stone house, standing among a few cherry trees. Opposite to the house, just across the Sestaione, is a large and very singular rock, detached from the precipice behind it, and appearing like a tall square tower of regular shape. About this rock, Beatrice, who knows every story and legend in the country, tells a very strange story indeed, and I will tell it, as nearly as possible, in her words.

"That tower is the tower of the Fattucchio. I do not know who the Fattucchio was, but they say he built it very long ago; and there is hidden treasure there, which no one can ever find. For you know that after any treasure has been buried for a hundred years, the Evil One takes possession of it, and will not let any one have it. But there was a woman once who saw the treasure in that tower. She had gone close to the tower on the side toward the mountain, where it is not easy to go, and she saw an open window, and she went and looked in, and saw a chamber in the tower; and in the chamber she saw the figure of a woman dressed as a nun, all of gold, laid in a golden coffin, and by her side a golden axe. When she saw all this she was frightened, and ran away and told her neighbours, and they all came to look, but when they arrived the window was shut, and no one was ever able to find even where it had been. If the woman had not so lost her head when she looked into the tower, she might have left her rosary on the window-sill, and then the evil spirits could not have shut the window. At another time, a little girl, who used to follow the sheep, found half a paul every day, for some time, in the same place, close under the tower; but after she began to talk about it, she never found any more.

"But they say that in Rome they have certain books, with everything written in them that has ever happened in the world; and on Christmas eve, every year, they take out those books and read them all night long

* A little wild yellow amaranth, with a spicy perfume. [J. R.]

until the morning. And in one of those books it is written that there is buried treasure at the distance of a hundred steps from Riofredi; and Riofredi is the ancient name of the Sestaione."

In that year when we heard the giostra of St. Pellegrino, she used to be much with us, generally coming over to pass Sunday with us at l'Abetone. On the last Sunday of our stay there, knowing that we must part for a long time, we walked part of the way home with her, up the side of the mountain which divides l'Abetone from the valley of the Sestaione. When the sun had set we took leave of her; she said a few parting words to each of us, but when she came to my mother (who was her favourite) she laid both her hands on her shoulders, and stood looking straight into her eyes for a minute, while a new and strange light came into her face, making her appear quite different from her usual self. Then she sang, with more sadness in her voice than I had ever heard in it before, an ottava of farewell; and having done that, she turned without another word, and walked away quickly up the steep path. I can see her now, as she looked in the clear summer twilight, walking between the low firs and beeches with her firm light step, never looking back, but just raising her hand once to wipe the tears from her eyes, before she quite passed from our sight.

I have spoken, in the preface,[1] of Beatrice's troubles with her sister-in-law, Barbara. It seemed a strange ordering of Providence, that Barbara, in her extreme old age, after the death of her brother, should be left as helpless as an infant in the hands of the woman whom she had so persecuted: during her last illness, which lasted many months, Beatrice was her devoted nurse and companion. I asked Beatrice once if Barbara, before she died, ever expressed any regret for her treatment of her. "When she was dying," said Beatrice, "she took my hand, and said, 'Addio, Beatrice.' That was enough, was it not?" And if the words were spoken in the voice in which Beatrice repeated them to me, I think they *were* enough. The family, as I have said, owned a fine farm; but one year the harvest failed, and they were, for the time, very poor. Beatrice thought, if she could see us, we should help her; and so, with her usual energy, she packed a ball of butter and some chestnut cakes in a little basket, that she might bring us a present, and set off from Pian di Novello for Florence, quite alone. She did not know our name, nor where we lived, but she knew that we came from America, and that we were called Lucia and Francesca; and as every one at l'Abetone knew us, she supposed that every one in Florence would do the same.

Much of the way she walked; a strange man carried her for some miles in his baroccio, for charity; the last part of her journey she came by the railroad. Our house is pretty near the station, and Beatrice, as if guided by Providence, stopped to ask for us at the shop of a wood and charcoal seller, who knew us, and recognised us from her description. He showed her the way, and, a few minutes later, Beatrice made her appearance at the door, and dropped into my arms, cold and tired and hungry, but laughing triumphantly to think that she had accomplished her journey. But I have told enough about my dear old friend, whom I cannot expect others to care for as I do.[2]

[1] [See above, p. 58.]

[2] [For Ruskin's re-arrangement of Miss Alexander's stories, see p. 48.]

So now we come to St. Christopher, of whom the original is Beatrice's second poet son. He has not the peculiar talent of an improvisatore, but he can write verses which seem to me quite beautiful. The letter from Angelo to Rosina, on the ninety-third page,[1] is by him; and I should have more of his poetry in the book, if it were not for one great misfortune. He was never taught to write; and though, after he was grown up, and his hands had become stiff with hard work, he managed to teach himself, his writing has always been—— what might be expected. When I told him that I should like to copy any verses that he might have written down, he brought me quite a pile of papers, so written that I could really hardly make anything out of them. I would not have minded the spelling—I can understand almost anything in the way of spelling; but sometimes half a word was left out, sometimes a whole word, sometimes a whole line; and Angelo could not remember his own poetry well enough to fill up the gaps, as most of it had been composed and written down long before.

There were *three* letters to Rosina, and I could not read the whole of any one; if I must tell the truth, the letter which I give is made up by putting together the intelligible verses of *two* letters; that was the best I could do, and I believe it is all right as far as it goes. Angelo never married Rosina: I asked him, when he gave me the letters, what had become of her, and his only reply was: "After I came back that year from the Maremma, I never looked at her again." And it seemed to me, though perhaps I was mistaken, that there was a slight tone of contempt in his usually kind voice. "And then," he went on to say, looking away from my face, and speaking as it were rather to himself than to me, "I came to live in these parts, and then I met this one, and then——" He did not finish the sentence, but I knew too well the life of hardship and misfortune which that last "and then" stood for. "This one," was his wife Serafina, who is a very good, patient, hard-working woman, and much attached to him. As for Rosina, I saw that it would be an impertinence in me to say any more about her; so all that I know is, that in one of Angelo's letters he appeared to be extremely jealous of some new admirer who was coming after her. And also I know this, that his first child was named Rosina.

Angelo is a stone-mason, a very honest, capable, conscientious workman; and he lives in a neat, pretty little stone house, which he built with his own hands, every stone of it, from the foundation to the slated roof, and little niche for the Madonna over the door. (I saw him building it.) And beside it he planted some cherry trees, such as grew about his mother's old house at Pian degli Ontani; and he planted a little bit of a garden, and made a brush fence about it. That branch of wild cherries which I have drawn on the eighty-second page[2] came from one of Angelo's cherry trees; I remember when Serafina brought it to me, and she asked to see her husband's picture, and when I showed it to her (as St. Christopher) she burst into tears, and said, "If Angelo should die, I could never bear to look at that picture, it is so much like him!" He was out of health

[1] [In Miss Alexander's numbering of the original MS. book; leaves 106 and 107 in the synopsis (p. 46). For previous mention of the Letter, see p. 141.]

[2] [Again in Miss Alexander's numbering; leaf 94 in the synopsis, with part of the music of the Christmas Hymn of Fiumalbo.]

at the time, and I suppose that was why she felt so: poor man! I am afraid he is out of health now. A few years ago the diphtheria visited l'Abetone and the neighbouring country, and three of poor Angelo's five children were taken—his only son, and his two eldest daughters. They all died in the course of a month. Neither the father nor the mother were ever the same people again, and Angelo's great distress of mind brought on a complaint of the heart, from which he has suffered ever since.

Besides being a poet, Angelo is a beautiful singer, and a great teller of stories. I remember that one of his stories was a *very* free version of Orpheus and Eurydice. I asked him once, when he began to tell the story, who Orpheus was, just to see what he would say; and he replied, without hesitation: "He was a man who used to play on the violin, and when Eurydice used to go to cut grass for the cattle, he used to sit behind some bushes, just at the edge of the woods, and play on his violin, and sometimes sing to her, so as to amuse her while she worked; but he himself used to keep away out of sight; she could hear him, but not see him. But poor Eurydice, one hot day—you see she used to go barefoot when she went to cut the grass—she trod on a snake, and he bit her, and he was one of the poisonous kind. So she died. Orpheus took it very much to heart; he made a little song about her afterwards—perhaps I can remember it." All this told in a tone of deep sympathy, and as if he were talking about one of his neighbours. But this will be enough about Angelo.

RISPETTI

These rispetti[1] were taught me by Edwige Gualtieri, who learned them when a child at Pian de' Giullari. She apologized for their homeliness, saying that they were only "songs of country loves," but they seem to me pretty: they were the only ones, among many which she knew, that I had never heard before.

I notice that you seem to like some of the more fanciful rispetti, which I was afraid nobody would ever like, excepting the Contadini and me: and so I put but few of that sort in the book. But here is one of Edwige's that she learned from good Signora Margherita; and I think it is pretty, though not much more than a nursery rhyme.

It was in Venice, a fine evening towards sunset, and Edwige and I were leaning out of a window over the Grand Canal, and watching the sunset lights on the old palaces, when all at once a swallow shot by over the water below us, bringing a sudden light that was not like sunset at all into the worn, patient face beside me. Suddenly she seemed to recognize something of her childhood among the decaying magnificences about us, and she repeated the old words, keeping her eyes on the bird till it was out of sight.

[1] [Nos. (i.), (ii.), and (iii.) on the two following pages. The first section of Miss Alexander's note was appended to the songs in the original MS. book—leaf 59—"The first three of these rispetti . . .' appearing, however, instead of "These . . ." A fourth song (not given by Ruskin), "When I am dead," is added below, p. 236. The first of the songs is much like No. 572 in Tigri's collection. The song to the swallow is his No. 676.]

RISPETTI D'AMORI CONTADINESCHI

(i)

Ho seminato una proda d'amore;
Non me n'è nato un maledetto filo!
Non so, se ne divien dall' aridore,
O veramente il seme era cattivo.
Ho seminato laggiù in quel piano,
Credeva fusse amore, ed era grano.
Ho seminato lassù in quel poggio,
Credeva fusse amore, ed era orzo.

(ii)

E s'è rannuvolato e par che piove,
E s'è turbato le chiare fontane,
E s'è turbato quella del' amore;
E par che piova e s'e fatto un bel sole!
E s'è turbato quella del' amante,
E par che piova, e il sol da sulle piante.

(iii)

Piacesse al Cielo che potessi fare,
La vostra casa vicina alla mia;
L'amor dalla finestra vorrei fare,
Saren du' cuor contenti, anima mia!
Saren due cuor contenti e sinceri,
San due cuori innamorati veri.

ASCOLTA, RONDININA

O Rondinina, che voli per mare
Voltati addietro, e ascolta due parole.
Dammi una penna delle tue bell' ale;
Vo' scriver una lettera al mio amore:
E quando l'avrò scritta e fatta bella,
Ti renderò la penna, Rondinella.
E quando l'avrò scritta e sigillata,
O, Rondinina, ne resto obligata.
E quando l'avrò scritta e fatta d'oro.
Ti renderò la penna, e il tuo bel volo.

SONGS OF COUNTRY LOVES

(i)

I sowed a bank with love, but all in vain,
For never one unlucky blade would grow!
It may be that it failed for want of rain,
Perhaps the seed was bad, I do not know.
But all the seed I sowed on yonder plain,
I thought was love, 'twas only common grain.
And on that hill the seed that I let fall
Was only common barley after all!

(ii)

The clouds have gathered, and I hear the rain,
The storm has troubled every fountain clear.
Love's fountain ne'er shall flow so bright again!
But stay! The sun's beginning to appear!
Love's fountain trembles when the storm it sees:
But while it rains, the sun shines on the trees.

(iii)

If Heaven would grant the only joy I seek,
To move thy house and set it close to mine,
From window then to window we could speak,
And in two hearts would full contentment shine.
And in two hearts, with joy too great to tell,
Would love sincere and full contentment dwell.

HEAR ME, SWALLOW DEAR

Oh Swallow, flying close along the sea,
Turn back, turn back, and to my words attend.
From thy bright wing one feather give to me,
For I would write a letter to my friend.
And when I've written all, and made it clear,
I'll give thee back thy feather, swallow dear.
And when 'tis written, and the seal is set,
I never more thy kindness will forget;
And when 'tis written all in gold, then I
Will give thy feather back, and see thee fly.

THE LEGEND OF ST. CHRISTOPHER

BY THE TRANSLATOR

St. Christopher was the largest and strongest of all men in the world, a terrible man in war; and he served a great pagan king, who showed him much honour because no one could stand against him. And Christopher, seeing that every one feared him, and that there was no other like him, became proud of his strength, for he had not the light of faith, and did not know who gave it to him; and he said that he would serve no unworthy master, but only the most powerful king who lived: and having heard that in a distant country there lived a greater king than his own, he went and offered himself to his service.[1] The new king, who was a Christian, received him very kindly, and held him in much esteem, for his strength, his beauty, and his perfect fidelity, and he made him captain over all his army.

For a long time Christopher was contented in this service, and the country was in great peace and safety, for his very appearance was enough to terrify all his enemies. Though they say that with all his terrible power, his looks were not ferocious, but very noble and beautiful, and he was of a kind heart, and liked to help those who were in trouble; but he was proud, and it never went well with those who opposed him. And he wore armour inlaid with gold, and when he walked in the sun, he used to dazzle the eyes of all who saw them.

Now one day the king gave a great entertainment to all the principal people in his kingdom; and Christopher, who was his favourite, stood by his side. And there were many musicians and singers present, and Christopher was very happy listening to the music. But after a while he noticed that now and then, in the songs, a name entered that he had never heard before, which was the name of Satan; and every time that he heard it, the king made the sign of the cross and appeared troubled. Pretty soon Christopher came up to his side, and asked him, in a low voice, why he made that sign when he heard the name of Satan: and the king answered, Because I am so afraid of him,—he is always trying to ruin me! "What," said Christopher, "are you afraid of Satan? Then he must be greater than you are, and I am going to serve him!" So he left the good king, and walked away out of the city in great haste, not exactly knowing where he was going, but feeling angry to think that he had been serving an unworthy master, whom even a name could frighten.

After a while he found that he was entering a wood, and as he walked along where the trees were thick he saw suddenly standing before him a very handsome and stately man, magnificently dressed, who saluted him

[1] [See Plate XX.; above, p. 206. The verses under the drawing are stanzas 7 and 8 of the Ballad.]

Saint Christopher

That sign, the warrior said, what may it be?
For me, I never saw its like before.
The rebel spirit raised his eyes to see,
Then turned his back toward it, trembling sore.
From out his wicked mouth the flames did flee,
And thus he spoke, when he could speak once more:
"Alas, alas that I have lost thy soul!
His force is on me. I must tell the whole.

Behold the sign of **Iesus** my great foe,
Who doth constrain me ever, night and day;
It was on that cross to give me shame and woe.
He died, and dying took my strength away!
Then thou, said Christopher, art far below
Thus **Iesus**, if his sign can thee dismay:
Thou hast deceived me Satan, we must part;
To him I give my service and my heart.

Disse allora il guerrier, Che segno è quello
Che mai tale non vidi in vita mia.
Alzando gli occhi le spiriti a Dio-rubello,
"Le spalle ad un tratto alla croce volgia,
Vomitò dalla bocca il Nonnubello
Di fiamme, ed a Cristoforo rispondia:
Ahimè che persi la fatica e il frutto!
"Forza mi è che ti dichiari il tutto.

Di Cristo mio nemico ecco il gran segno.
Che mi sferza e flagella a tutte l'ore!
Volle morir sopra quel duro legno.
Per accrescere a me pena e dolore.
Dunque **Cristo** è uom di te più degno.
Mentre l'insegna sua ti da timore!
(Gli disse il Cavalier) te ne puoi gire.
Io ti lascio. e **Gesù** voglio seguire.

with much grace, and extended his hand to him, saying, "Welcome, my Christopher! I was expecting you." "Who are you?" said Christopher. "How do you know me? I can't remember that I ever saw you before!" "No!" said the other, smiling graciously, "you never saw me, but I know you. I am Satan, whom your king and all the other kings are afraid of; and I heard that you were thinking of entering my service, and so I came down into this wood to wait for you; for I knew that you would come this way. You have done well to choose me for a master, for I will give you whatever you ask,—all the pleasures of the world to enjoy; and more wealth than you can spend, and to be honoured and praised by all." "I thank you, Satan," said Christopher; "you speak very kindly, but I do not care so much about any of these things as I do about serving a worthy master, one whom I can really honour. I left the king's service because he was afraid of you: now tell me the truth—is there no one greater than you? No one whom you are afraid of?" "No," said Satan proudly, and stretching himself up very tall; "I never met any one yet who was not afraid of me!" "Then we are agreed," said Christopher, taking his hand: "I will serve you faithfully as long as I live; that is, if I never find any one stronger than you." So they walked along together, Satan talking about all the grand things that he was going to do for Christopher, until, after they had left the wood for some time, they saw by the roadside a wooden cross, such as one often sees in country places. And Christopher, looking up, said thoughtfully, "What is that, Satan? I never saw anything like that before."[1] Satan raised his eyes, and, as they fell upon the cross, he began to tremble and his face grew deadly pale. "Satan," said Christopher, "you are afraid!" and Satan answered, "I fear Christ, my great enemy, who died upon a cross like that!" "Then," said Christopher, "Christ is greater than you, and I go to serve Him." At this Satan gave a great cry, and his face changed, and became very horrible; and fire came out of his mouth, and he disappeared, leaving a great smoke behind him.

After this we are told that Christopher wandered about the country for a great while asking every one whom he met "where Christ lived?" and some laughed at him, and some thought he was mad, and others were afraid of his great size and warlike appearance, and ran away, and so he found no help. At last, one day, as he was walking over the side of a mountain, he came to a poor little cabin, where an old hermit lived quite alone. The old man was sitting by the door, and when he saw Christopher approaching, in his shining armour, he was much frightened at first, and made the sign of the cross. But Christopher spoke to him very gently: "Father, do not be afraid of me, but help me. I have been so long looking for Christ. Can you tell me where He lives?" And when the hermit heard that name, his fear all passed away, and he said "Sit down here by me, my son, and I will tell you all about Christ." So Christopher sat down on a stone by the hermit's side, and the old man told him all the story of the Lord's life,—how He came down from Heaven to save us, and was born in a stable in the winter; and how poor He was, and about His mother; and how the shepherds and the

[1] [See Plate XXI.; the verses underneath the drawing are stanzas 14 and 15 of the Ballad.]

kings of the East came to worship Him. And by the time he had gone as far as that, the tears were running down Christopher's face.

And as the old man went on and told all the rest of the story, Christopher's heart so warmed up with love to this new master, that he felt as if he had never loved any one before: and he said, "Oh, Father, do you think He would take *me* into His service?" And the hermit said, "I know He will, my son, for He never refuses any one; if you want really to serve Him, you must give up all the world and come and lead a penitent life such as I do, in continued fasting and prayer." At that, Christopher looked rather sober, and he said, "But, Father, I am not fit for such a life as that: I think I should die, and what use would there be in it? I have nothing to bring to my Master's service excepting my great strength: can I not use that in some way that will please Him?" The hermit considered for a while, and then he said, pointing to a white river which lay shining in the distance far below them, "My son, do you see that river? They have never been able to build a bridge over it that the spring floods would not carry away. A great many people want to cross the river, and cannot unless they have a boat, or unless the water is very low. Now, if you, who are so strong, will go and live by the side of that river, and carry over on your shoulders all who want to pass the waters, that will be a service that the Lord will accept."[1] At this Christopher was very happy; and having taken leave of the hermit, and recommended himself to his prayers, he set off on his journey to the river, which he reached the next day.

And having laid aside his armour, and dressed himself in poor clothes befitting his new occupation, he built himself a little cottage of rough stones and branches of trees, close to the water's edge, and there lived quite alone. And whenever any travellers came that way and wanted to cross to the other shore, he took them upon his shoulders, one at a time, and carried them over. And he never minded how late it was, or how cold, and he was always more pleased when the most work came to his hand. He would now have been quite happy had it not been that, as time went on, the longing to see his Master grew so strong in his heart that he could hardly bear it. Always when he was alone, this was his prayer—that he might see only once the face of Him whom he loved; that was the only reward that he desired for his long service.

One night he was very tired, having passed many people over the river that day; and there was such a storm that he felt pretty sure no one else would come; so he lay down on his bed of dry leaves to rest. And he was just dropping off to sleep, when he heard, above the whistling of the wind and the beating of the rain and the rushing of the river close by, a cry as of a child in distress, "Christopher, Christopher, come and help me!" He started up and ran out of the door, fearing lest some poor little child was lost in the storm; but not a living soul could he find; and at last he thought that he must have been dreaming, and he went and lay down on the leaves again. But this time he could not sleep.

And before long he heard the same voice calling him again. And again he went to look, and he searched far and near, and called the child,

[1] [See Plate XXII.; the verse underneath the drawing is stanza 21 of the Ballad.]

Full quickly then the aged saint replied:
And if thou wouldst both peace and glory find,
One path there is, one thorny path beside,
On which if thou wilt venture, heart and mind,
The rose will blossom where the thorns abide.
And thou shalt leave a holy name behind.
Behold that mighty river, broad and free.
How proudly grand it rolls toward the sea.

Il santo vecchio sabito rispose:
Se conseguir vorrai l'eterna gloria,
Dice non poter far ciò ch'io t'impose,
Opra t'ho da insegnar più meritoria.
Spine a te sembraran, ma poi son rose.
E di te lascerai santa memoria.
Mira il gran fiume Nilo che qui appare:
Come orgoglioso da tributo al mare.

My son, what accident has led thee here
So late at night, and in a storm so wild?
Thy guide, where is he? Has he fled for fear?
And how hast thou escaped the beasts, poor child?
Oh man, fulfil my wish and thou shalt hear!
The Dabe replied, in loving voice and mild
When thou hast come me through this water
Then thou shalt know my name, and who
am

Figlia, qual ti accidenti qui ti mena
In sì strana ora, e in tempo sì spietato?
Chi te guidò in questa mala arena?
E come dalle fiere sei scampato?
Uom, se vuoi far mia voglia sazia e piena
Parrami, e non tardar, dall' alto lato.
Posto che mi avrai sull' altra via,
Io ti farò saper qual io mi sia

but no one answered. Then he said, "Some one is doing it on purpose; if I hear it again I will not mind." And he lay down on the leaves again, but the little child's cry came so often and sounded so sad, that it seemed to go through his heart, and he could not help going out once again. And now he heard the cry quite distinctly, and he was sure that it was on the other side of the river. So he waded into the stream and crossed it as he best could (for the water was very high), and on the other side he found a little child sitting alone and waiting for him. "Poor little child!" said Christopher: "how did you come here? and who are you?"[1] "Take me over the river," said the child, "and then I will tell you who I am." So Christopher placed the child on his shoulder and walked into the river again. But as soon as he was in the deep water, the child began to grow heavy—so heavy that he felt that all the burdens that ever he had carried were nothing to this! And the staff that he carried in his hand—it was a large fir tree which he had used for several years—bent under the weight;[2] and with all his great strength he felt sometimes as if he and the child would both go down under the water together. But he clung to the child, and at last, he hardly knew how, he struggled up the shore. He sat down quite exhausted, and placed the child on the grass beside him. And when he could speak, he said, "Little one, who are you? for I thought I was carrying a mountain on my shoulder!" And the child answered, "You have carried more than the world, for I am He who made the world." Then Christopher knew that his long prayer was answered, and he knelt down and worshipped the child, who appeared now all shining with light. And the child told him that his service was accepted, but that henceforward he was called to a nobler service, and must go out into the world and preach, and bring many souls into the light. And Christopher said, "How can I preach, for I have no learning? how can I persuade them?" And the child told him to plant in the earth the dry fir tree that he carried in his hand; and when he did so it became green and was covered with fresh leaves. And the child said, "When you speak and they will not believe, plant your staff in the ground and it will grow green before their eyes, because with that staff in your hand you carried the Lord!"

I have done as well as I could from memory, and with no book to look at; only Edwige helped me a little, and ended by going off into tears, as she said, "Poor man, how happy he must have been!—only to think of finding out that he had been carrying the Lord! And it makes us so happy to do any little thing for our friends that we love here: if we could only now do some little thing for Him!" I told her that whatever we did for His children we did for Him. "Yes," she said, "that is in the Gospel, but"—and she looked away into vacancy, as if she were trying to see something, as her habit is, when she is thinking, —"I keep thinking, do you not know when our friends die, no matter how much we have done for them, we are always wishing we had done more. Well, I think when we go to heaven we shall feel like that; we shall be so sorry that we have not done more for the Lord Jesus!" And with this comment of Edwige's on St. Christopher I must end.

[1] [See Plate XXIII.; the verse is stanza 28.]

[2] [See Plate XXIV.]

EDITOR'S NOTE ON THE VISION OF ST. CHRISTOPHER

When Lord Lindsay, the head and captain of all literature relating to early Italian painting, first wrote the complete legend of St. Christopher, in the prefatory chapters, called the "Mythology" of his *Christian Art*,[1]—I remember his being much blamed by many members of the English Church for his use of the word, till then reserved for the schemes of Greek Theogony, as applicable to the stories of mediæval Christendom. I do not know in what degree the Catholic Church would also blame him, or how far in its own schools the tale of St. Christopher is proposed for belief as history, or with interpretation, as myth. I could myself much more easily explain Francesca's final version of it as the gradually enriched and sunset-gilded tradition of a dream or vision seen by a hermit ferryman, than I can interpret its incidents as symbolizing any course of facts of spiritual life. Reading it as a myth, I am myself utterly uncertain of the meaning of the king, —the knight, the river, or the oppression felt by the Saint in bearing Him whose yoke is easy, and whose burden is light.[2] But, encouraged in my own love of Tintoret by Edwige's sympathy,[3] I will hope for the reader's pleasure also, in being reminded of Tintoret's figure of St. Christopher in Paradise, bearing the globe of the world, surmounted by a cross, and by whose surface a beam of light descending from the enthroned Christ is reflected in a dazzling star.[4] By which I have always understood Tintoret to mean what Holman Hunt meant by his "Light of the World,"[5] but with the further lesson, that the visitation which was to sanctify our world for us with eternal day,

[1] [See pp. xcvi.–c. in "The Mythology of Christianity" in vol. i. of *Sketches of the History of Christian Art*, 1847. For Ruskin's review of the book, see Vol. XII. pp. 169 *seq.*; for his estimate of the author as "captain of all literature relating to early Italian painting," compare *ibid.*, p. xxxix. *n.*]

[2] [Matthew xi. 30.] [3] [As recounted by Francesca, above, p. 174.]

[4] [Compare the description of the picture in *The Relation between Michael Angelo and Tintoret*, Vol. XXII. p. 105.]

[5] [See the account of the picture in Vol. XII. pp. 328–330.]

would come first through the deepest night, and in the heaviest toil of the occupation which was our earthly duty. I think also that Tintoret may have intended to make us feel how greatly the story of St. Christopher had been itself a light to all the Christian, and might be to all the future, world. But none of these lessons by great imaginative interpreters, however probable, guide us to any clear reading of the legend for all men, in the continuous action of it; nor, if any such could be given, would the application be other than forced and untrustworthy. At first thought most of us would suppose the river meant human life; but that river we do not cross, but descend: we are troubled when it is troubled, calm when it is calm—we do not resist its current, nor refuse its peace. Again, in memory of more recent fables, we might think of it as the river of death; but the travellers whom the Saint carried over resumed their journey, and he himself, finally fording it, begins his true ministry of the Gospel. Take it for some chief time of trouble, and we might, perhaps, without much strain, suppose the meaning to be, that the man who had sustained others in their chief earthly trials, afterwards had Christ for companion in his own;—but this idea would never occur easily and naturally to very simple persons who heard the story;—it is rare that among the many confused evils of existence, any of us can fix on that which once traversed was to be feared no more; and I should be extremely reluctant to offer to my Protestant readers, as the true sense of the loveliest of Catholic legends, the thought that common people were only to have a saint to comfort them in their troubles, while the saint himself had Christ. More and more, as I think over it, I am led to take it for the memory of what really once happened to some kindly warden of a river ford, bearing by the grace of natural human feeling, comfort afterwards to all who hear of it for ever.

I had not, till Francesca wrote it for us, myself known the sequel of the ministry, with the putting forth the leaves of the pine tree. It is, I suppose, only by the coincidence of thought which runs through all great legend and literature

that the putting forth of blossom by the rod of Aaron,[1] and of leaf by the staff of St. Christopher,* teach the life and beneficence of the Sceptres of the just—as the for ever leafless sceptre of Achilles,[2] and the spear whose image was the pine, hewn for ships of battle from the Norwegian hills,[3] show in their own death the power of the Kings of Death.

The praise given in a foregoing number[4] to the two drawings of St. Christopher with which I close this book, will not, I believe, seem exaggerated to any of its readers who will compare them with the older renderings of the same subject. I cannot say "subjects," for as far as I am aware there is no earlier design representing the appeal of the Child at the shore. I should like this drawing to be compared with the one of the Gipsy prophesying,[5] in illustration of Francesca's mysterious power of giving expression by gesture. It has been observed to me more than once, that her figures are wanting in general ease of action: and this is true; she seems to have no care—in some sort, no power—to give the sway and strength of the moving figure, under ordinary conditions of merely physical action; so that when there is no emotion guiding their gesture, her figures are often stiff—sometimes ill drawn. On the other hand, wherever emotion is to be expressed by the turn of the body or position of the hand or foot, her instinct is not only unerring, but fine beyond all fineness hitherto shown in this kind.

In both these drawings of the Infant Christ,—in that of the mountain-girl comforting her lover, and in that of the soldier kneeling by his dead love,—the expression is given by

* Compare also the blossoming of the spears of Charlemagne's knights, in the window of Chartres Cathedral representing his life.—Vétault's *Charlemagne*, plates 4th and 5th.[6] [J. R.]

[1] [Numbers xvii. 8.]

[2] [*Iliad*, i. 234–239. The passage is quoted, with Pope's translation, in *Proserpina* (Vol. XXV. p. 308): see also Vol. XXI. p. 110.]

[3] [See the description of Satan in *Paradise Lost*, i. 292:—

"His spear—to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great ammiral, were but a wand."]

[4] [See now p. 206.] [5] [Plate XV.; above, p. 159.]

[6] [*Charlemagne, par Alphonse Vétault, Introduction par Léon Gautier:* Tours, 1877. The plates are at p. 75, and the scenes depicted on the window are explained at pp. 545–547.]

a subtlety of truth in the lines of gesture which can neither be explained nor imitated,—its secret is in perfectness of skill guided by purity of sympathy. Look also, in the last plate, at the placing of the child's hand on St. Christopher's cheek.

I had partly hoped,[1] in closing this series of pictures of the hearts of the Italian peasantry, to indicate the main lessons they seemed to bear for us all. But I am abashed before their strength and innocence, and able to draw only this one conclusion of deep practical import,—that the only service we can rightly render them is to love them. For other races, there is much service possible in mere worldly prudence and protective care;—in many and many a foreign land, there are listless hands to be lifted by England's energy, or rude minds to be regulated by her laws, and lighted by her science. But the people of Italy are dying for need of Love: only in returning love for love they become themselves, and enter into possession of their own souls, by the gift of them.

I have learned this not from Francesca only. Strangely, another dear American friend, Charles Eliot Norton, with his wife and family, residing in Italy—I forget how long—(I was with them in their villa near Siena in 1872[2]), were the first to tell me this quite primary character of the Italian peasantry. Their own princes have left them, and abide in their great cities—no one cares for the mountaineers; and their surprise—in the beginning, at finding any one living amidst them who could love them;—their answer, in the end, of gratitude flowing like the Fonte Branda,[3] as he described them to me, have remained ever since among the brightest and the saddest beacons, and reproaches, of my own too selfish life. I am thankful it has been spared at least to place before my countrymen these records of domestic virtue yet vivid and pure, in the nation which taught us the first syllables of Christ's Gospel,—and who still, amidst the rage of the heathen,[4] and through the flood of the earth's sorrow and sin, bears, in the sacred strength of her charity, the Burden of the Lord.

[1] [See above, p. 119.] [2] [Really in 1870; for the visit, see Vol. XX. p. liii.]
[3] [See Vol. XVII. p. 551; Vol. XXIII. p. 29; and *Præterita*, iii. § 86.]
[4] [Psalms ii. 1.]

FATTI ALLA FINESTRA

This and the following song[1] have been kept for the final number, because they express in the most pathetic and simple way the guiding power of womanhood, which surely, through all these stories of practical and patient life, is felt to be the chief element of its strength, and the highest source, humanly speaking, of its comfort and virtue.

In the name of all the readers of this book, nor least earnestly in my own, I have to thank its Authoress for the help she has brought us in these days of spiritual darkness and worldly trial, when faith is failing and love is cold; giving us sight of the truth of God, and the sweetness of His creatures, out of the windows of Heaven; as if indeed she had answered, thus, our literal asking,—

"Fatti alla finestra, Donna Mia."

FATTI ALLA FINESTRA
(GIVE ME LIGHT, LADY)

"O fatti alla finestra, donna mia!
Fammelo un po' di lume a camminare!
Che mi si è stretto il buio a mezza via,
Fra pietre e sassi vengo a inciampicare.
E mi si è stretto il buio a mezzo il fiume,
L'acqua m'abonda, e non vedo lume."

"Come to the window, lady, give me light!
A little light that I may find my way!
For darkness deep is on my path to-night,
Among the stones, I fall, or go astray.
I cross a troubled river, lady mine:
Deep is the water, and no light doth shine.
And darkness found me where the waves were high;
My feet have failed, so deep the waters lie!
So far was I from shore, when darkness came!
And no one answers, when I call thy name."

OH CASA BUIA
(NIGHT-FALL)

"O casa buia, oh vedova finestra,
Dov' è quel sol che ci soleva dare?
E ci soleva ridere e far festa?
Ora vedo le pietre lacrimare.
Ora vedo le pietre stare in pena;
O casa buia, oh finestra serena!"

"Oh darkened house, oh widowed window, say,
Where is that sun that lately from thee shone?
That smiled, and made such brightness in the way?
And now . . . What see I? Tears on every stone!
And now I see the very stones in pain;
Oh window, that may never shine again!"

[1] [Nos. 953 and 646 in Tigri's collection.]

TALK UNDER THE OLIVES

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Among the many letters under my hand in which Francesca has illustrated with pretty chance-chosen detail the ways of her sweet friends, I have set aside these following pieces for our closing number; the first showing that the gentle nature of Italy is still in her princely maids as well as in her peasant ones; the rest, completing more or less the life of Edwige, and leading on to the loveliest little story in all the book—that of her children's housekeeping.

One day, a young girl had come to see the book by appointment; she is a lovely beauty, the daughter of a duke, from Modena. While she was looking at it, a large party appeared who were leaving Florence and could not come again: she was very sweet and kind, she said she could wait, and they should have her place. So another day was named for her, and she came again. She had just begun the book again, when a friend came from near l'Abetone, a poor contadina, with some eggs, chestnuts, and mushrooms. She was brown, weather-beaten, and wrinkled. She recognised some familiar scenes and faces in the book, and the young girl made room for her to sit down beside her, and they looked through it together, talking over it in manners and voices equally sweet, gentle, and self-possessed.

We have had our minds much taken up these last days with the poor old contessa: her will has been read, and does not please *anybody*, and now I have to hear her abused by those whom she was kind to in her life, which is very trying to me. Edwige said this morning: (it is almost too bad to repeat, but she spoke with the utmost reverence) "Poor lady, I dare say she did as well as she knew how; she could not content everybody,—no one can; you know what the Good Lord Himself said, after He made people in the world: '*I am not afraid but I can take care of you, but it is more than I can do to content you*' (A camparvi non mi sgomento, ma a contentarvi, si')." I kept silent, not knowing what to say to such an extraordinary assertion, and she said: "What He says must be true, must it not?" "Certainly," I answered; "but I never heard of His saying that." To which she replied, with solemnity: "It is in the Gospel!"

That reminds me, there is something I wanted to tell you about Edwige, that I forgot when I wrote down the little account of her which you say you mean to have printed. You may not think it of any consequence, but I will just tell you in a few words, because it is the end of

the story about the lady who gave her a loaf of bread from her table, the day when she had nothing for the children, and had not courage to ask for it.[1] This lady, whose name was Annina, after the death of her husband was left quite poor, and infirm in health; she had just money enough to buy a piece of bread and keep a roof over her head, but she could no longer afford to keep a servant, as she had been used to do. And I remember when Edwige first came to me, that she could not come very early, because she always went first to do what she called a "mezzo servizio" for old Signora Annina. She would clean the house and light the fire, and make the coffee for the old lady's breakfast, and then come away to me. And when she left me in the afternoon she went back to her old friend to arrange everything for the night; and she did all her washing and ironing, often sitting up a great part of the night to do it. (I did not know this last until after Annina died, or I could not have let Edwige work so hard.) And all this she did every day for two years; and when at the end of these years Signora Annina was taken with her last illness, Edwige left me altogether, and nursed her night and day until she died. For all this of course she received no pay; the old lady's loaf of bread, and the kindness with which she gave it, secured her a devoted servant in her last years—such a servant as no money could have hired. Signora Annina put out her money to interest to some good purpose. I have just asked Edwige, sitting here beside me, how her strength ever supported the work that she did in those days? She says: "God did it, and not I! I was not able; but the day that I came home from the hospital, up the ascent to S. Francesco, with the baby in my arms, He came with me, and He always helped me."

I am *very* glad that you think it likely St. Christopher was a real person,[2] as all the people for whom the ballad was written fully believe. (I remember when Edwige first saw my picture of him, she said, with a sigh: "He looks thin, poor man! Well, I suppose he was so. Who knows whether he found much to eat there in the woods!") No one had ever explained the story to me in any way, but I always imagined that it was an image of spiritual life. A man never satisfied, feeling always that he is spending his strength for unworthy objects, until he hears of the One who is sufficient for us all; then the taking up of His service, and the laying aside of his armour, which I thought meant the giving up of all that he trusted in before. And the long service without reward or consolation, still persevered in, and the willing bearing of all the burdens; until at last, just when he carries the heaviest, and in the darkness and storm, the light shines all at once, and he sees the Face that he loves! With the power that comes to him afterwards of bringing others to the truth. This meaning of the story has always seemed so plain to me, that I have supposed that every one understood it so. The last number of the book will be the best, now that you have written this in it. I felt much all that you said about my contadini friends, and I am so thankful that the little stories about them have expressed, at least *to you*, what I should never have known how to put into words. (I believe in my own

[1] [See above, p. 172.]
[2] [See the footnote by Ruskin on p. 202 above.]

heart that there is not much good to be done to *any* people excepting by loving them, but that is certainly true to a peculiar extent of the Italians, both rich and poor!) I have seen so much good come of the real affection between dear Enrichetta[1] and her contadini, and I think that Italians, all those who are good for anything, are much more governed by their affections than any other people. But foreigners who come among them are too apt to look upon them with contempt, and to take for granted, from the first, that they are not to be trusted. I heard of a lady some years ago (quite a learned woman, and considered intellectual, but rather "new school," especially about religion) who, when making a visit to Italy, lost a large sum of money, in pieces of gold, in a lonely country place. A poor man, working in a field, found the gold and brought it back to her, (as almost any labouring man would do; they are the idle people who do the stealing,) and the friend of this lady, who told me the story, remarked: "She said, she supposed he was *frightened* at the sight of so much money: of course one can't expect these Italians to have any idea of *honesty;* but they are probably more used to stealing small sums!" And one evening, at sunset, in the harvest time, as I was walking with a young lady just come to the country, we met a party of tired reapers going home from their work, and she drew up close to my side, and asked me if I was not afraid of them! She apparently thought that they were brigands.

To-day is Holy Thursday, but it rains so that I cannot go to church; everybody has been preparing flowers for the Sepolcro:[2] the poor people raise pots of flowers in their windows, and try to have them in blossom for this day. Yesterday morning I saw a poor contadino driving into town with his little boy, in rather a shaky waggon, drawn by a rough little farm horse. They were bringing their presents for the Holy Week: two casks of wine, for the padrone, I suppose, and a beautiful pot of lilies of the valley for *Gesu.* All the country women have cleaned every corner of their houses, and scrubbed all the pans and dishes, and given fresh flowers to the Madonna, and ornamented the shelves with bay leaves.

I have been to church; and this morning I felt greatly honoured by a request to lend some of my plants from the terrace for the Sepolcro at Santa Maria Maggiore. It made me feel quite grand—almost as if my terrace were a real garden, (the bees that swarm about it had given me a little the same feeling before,) and I sent my largest palm tree and the prettiest of the wall-flowers and pansies. I suppose it is something the same sort of grandeur that poor Fortunato, the blind man at l'Abetone, felt, when he told me that the hotel keeper had offered to buy his house (a poor little cabin just falling to pieces). "I told him," he said, "that I had no need of money; I have everything I want, I live like a gentleman! and it has even happened to me"—here Fortunato raised his voice and waved his hand impressively—"to have a beggar take off his hat to me in the road,

[1] [For further notices of Enrichetta, see below, pp. 290, 297, 321, 326.]

[2] [The reader unfamiliar with this custom of the Church will find an account of it, and its history, in *The Liturgy in Rome* (being Part II. of a *Handbook to Christian and Ecclesiastical Rome,* by H. M. and M. A. R. T.), 1897, pp. 267, 268.]

and ask me to give him a soldo per l'amor di Dio!" If being begged of is a sign of social distinction, I cannot help thinking how very high in the social scale Edwige must stand, for she can never keep a soldo in her pocket. The other day, when she and I were talking over the wants of some of our poor neighbours, I asked her why she never came to me to ask for anything for her daughters, as I know that some of them are poor. She replied that she expected to do what they wanted out of her wages; and added, "I always expect to give away my money as it comes in: I know that when I am old you will not let me want for a piece of bread, and I do not see the use of laying up property for the mice to eat after I die! Besides, I have noticed that when people are rich (especially old people) their neighbours are always wishing they would die, and I should not like at all to have that happen to me." She sighed, but I assured her she was in no danger of that kind. To tell the truth, she gives away not only all her money but nearly all her clothes, and we cannot help it. We sometimes *lend* her clothes, instead of giving them, as that is the only way we can be sure she has enough to keep her warm in winter. We tell her to keep them until we come for them, and then of course we never do come for them. But I am wandering away from Giovedi Santa and the flowers. I went afterwards to the church, where a few quiet and devout people were praying or watching the priest and the custode as they arranged the "Sepulchre in the garden." A little girl of seven or eight years, very small, and carrying in her arms a heavy baby of about as many months, stood outside the altar railing, watching all the proceedings with extreme interest. The priest sent her away two or three times, but she always came back when he was not looking; and indeed she was in nobody's way, and I did not see why he could not let her stay if she enjoyed it so much. However, at last she went, stopping at the door to make a courtesy as well as she could with the heavy burden in her arms; and as she did so she took the baby's little soft hand and guided it to make the sign of the cross.

I wonder why so many ministers always preach as if they were reciting a lesson. My old minister[1] never behaved in that way: he talked in a natural voice, and as if he believed what he was saying; and he preached grand sermons, and once he preached one that was a great deal too grand, and made us feel as if we were not listening to a mortal man. I shall

[1] [Teodorico Pietrocola Rossetti, a cousin of D. G. Rossetti; born at Vasto, in Southern Italy; studied medicine; came to London in 1851, "hoping to find an opening of some kind; but found nothing except semi-starvation, which he bore with a cheerful constancy touching to witness. In 1856 or thereabouts he returned to Italy, practised for a moderate while medicine as a homœopathist, married a Scotch lady (originally Miss Steele, now Mrs. Cole), and, with her co-operation, devoted himself to preaching evangelical Christianity, somewhat of the Vaudois type, in Florence and elsewhere. He published a few things—among other things a biography of Gabriele Rossetti, a translation of *Alice in Wonderland*, and one of Christina Rossetti's poem *Goblin-Market*. A man of more native unselfish kindness, of stricter morals, or of nicer conscientiousness never lived" (*D. G. Rossetti, his Family Letters, with a Memoir*, by W. M. Rossetti, 1895, vol. i. p. 34). T. P. Rossetti died (aged about 56) in 1883. For another reference to him, see below, pp. 304, 319.]

never forget that sermon; it was on the union of the church in heaven with that on earth. And when he had finished it, and had sung a hymn with us, he was taken away suddenly, there in the presence of us all,—carried up to heaven like Elijah, almost! I can never finish being thankful that I was there. Yet judging from what I have seen myself, and heard from others, I do not think the death of Sig. Rossetti was different from that of most *really* Christian people, excepting in the fact of his having bodily strength sufficient to express plainly what he felt and saw in his last moments. I do not think that it was any more remarkable or beautiful than the death of the little boy of whom you tell in your "Retrospect,"[1] which I have just been reading, who died singing, and which seemed to me one of the loveliest stories that I ever read. I wish I knew how to explain things: it seems to me that when people come close to heaven the light begins to shine upon them, and they feel the air of the place before they enter the gate. There was Edwige's daughter Cesira, who died last November; a young, pretty woman, as far removed from anything high-wrought or fanatical as possible. Good she was, light-hearted and sunny-tempered, a most affectionate, hard-working wife and mother, pious too, in a simple childlike way. She had a great deal of trouble; she lost a beautiful little girl, and then her husband had a bad fall, which made him an invalid for the rest of his life, and another child that she had was sickly, and she herself had a painful and unusual illness, which lasted for years, and wore her out gradually. She used to work for a tailor as long as she was well enough, and used to help all her poor neighbours by cutting out the clothes for their husbands and boys; and only three weeks before her death, being no longer able to stand at a table, she knelt down on the floor to cut out some work for a poor woman who could not well afford to pay a tailor for doing it. And for another, who was blind, she did a great deal of sewing. Now, when her life came to its end, in great weakness and suffering, the light having all faded from her eyes, so that she no longer saw the daylight, the Lord Jesus appeared to her visibly, standing beside her, as she told her husband and mother, who were both present. I do not think her mind was wandering, for I saw her some hours later, and she knew me by my voice, and seemed quite conscious of everything about her. She said: "Now I see Jesus; I see all the justice of God!" and afterwards she said to her mother: "Oh mamma, what peace I have now! I wish I could give you this peace!" And she said to her husband: "Do not spend money for my funeral" (Italians of the poorer sort are very ambitious about their funerals); "I should like to have everything neat and clean, but nothing more; I have the Lord Jesus, and I do not want anything else." This is only one little story among so many that I know, and I believe that she really did see what she said.

But is it possible, that it is only lately you have begun to know about the "hidden servants"?[2] I keep thinking, how sad your life must have been, if you have not known them; for the *outside* of things in the world

[1] [The title of *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 94 (March 1884): see Vol. XXIX. p. 488.]

[2] [See *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 96 (Christmas 1884): Vol. XXIX. pp. 527–8. Compare below, p. 304; and see the Introduction, above, p. xxxi.]

always seems to be so ugly! And now I understand in what way it is that you think the lives of those poor obscure people which I have written down for you may be useful to others: the Lord grant it may be so! But if it really is such a blessing to know about the hidden servants, I am sure you can find them all about you. Whenever one sees a very sweet, happy, peaceful face (as often happens) in a poor wretched house, or a hospital, or anywhere in the midst of trouble, or if one sees such a face belonging to a very aged or infirm person, all I can say is, that I have never known the sign fail—and I have tried it often—that man, or that woman, has been drinking of the "living water," and has no more thirst. But what I sat down particularly to write this morning was about the Italian belief with regard to dreams, of which I can tell you some curious particulars (and I am so glad that you do not think, as many of my friends have thought, that I have *wasted my time* in collecting these old women's stories!). The old-fashioned Florentines believe these things, just as much as the country people do. And first of all, I must tell you one thing, which you can probably account for better than I can. I have spoken to you, I think, about that good American servant who taught me knitting when I was a small child. Her name was Jane Evans; she was a pious, excellent woman, a Methodist; and I was very fond of her. She had passed her childhood in the (then) wild country of Vermont, and could tell me no end of stories, such as I cared for, about all sorts of wild creatures, from a catamount to a humming-bird; and among other things, she used to tell me stories about dreams. She believed in them firmly, and would have made me believe in them, if my friends had not laughed so much at poor Jane's ideas. As it is, I remember now only one thing of all that she told me on this subject. She said, that to dream of *deep, still water,* was always a bad sign, and that she always dreamed of it herself before the death of any one whom she cared for. And now, strange to say, I find that the Italians believe exactly the same! They say that *running* water, however, especially if *turbid,* signifies the coming of some material good fortune, in the way of money or other possessions. To dream of climbing a mountain, is a good sign, and foretells some blessing; but the *descent* of a mountain means evil. Flowers growing on the plant signify some happiness coming, but if cut off, they are apt to mean trouble. Roses growing on the bush are the best sign of anything, and mean that our prayers have been granted. All birds bring good luck; a dove brings some particular spiritual blessing. Fruit on the tree brings a blessing—all but grapes, which mean tears,—but if the grapes have many green leaves about them, the tears will end in peace. Green leaves, or green grass, always are a blessed sign: you remember Ida's dream of the green field, just before she died.[1] Some people are "dreamers,"—their dreams almost always come to pass, while the dreams of others have no significance at all. People who have lost friends are always very anxious to know what the dreamers dream about them, thinking in that way to know something of their state in the other world. After Ida died, several people dreamed about her as being in a garden of flowers; Filomena dreamed that she was singing psalms, in a very sweet voice, as she stood among the plants in blossom. As I think over the "dreamers" whom I

[1] [See *The Story of Ida;* above, p. 33.]

have known, I find that they have all been sensitive, imaginative people, and often, though not always, in poor health. Often when people are in great trouble or danger, their friends who have crossed the river are sent back in dreams to comfort them. Before Edwige lost her husband (who left her, as you know, desolate, with her five children) she dreamed that she was in a little boat all alone on the sea, and a great cross rose out of the sea before her, and grew larger and larger; and then she saw the Madonna standing beside it, and looking at her compassionately, and as if she would have spoken to her, but could not. And a little while before Edwige's daughter Cesira died, her little child that she had lost so many years before, came to her in a dream, and put her arms about her neck, and said: "Mamma, I pray so much for you!" After the death of Cesira, for a while she drooped so that I was afraid she would go after her.[1] She grew thin and white and silent; but one day, after many months, I heard her singing, faintly, a little hymn; and I gave thanks with all my heart! From that day the shadow was lifted away from her life. The prettiest dream story I know was told me by an old Florentine lady, the daughter of the sculptor Pampaloni, the same who carved those two great statues in the Piazza del Duomo.[2] She is a very good old lady, and never told me a word that was not true; and she has told me this story over and over again, and never without tears. Her father and mother, who were very deeply attached to each other, made a promise each to the other, to the effect that, if the wife died before her husband, she should in some way let him know when she "received her crown"; and if he died first, he was to do the same for her. He was the first to be taken, and he left his wife, Carolina, and their young daughter, quite poor, so that they were obliged to leave their home, and move into small lodgings. They found themselves constrained also, with great regret, to part with their servant, Violante, who had been a long time with them, and was considered quite as one of the family. Some months after Pampaloni died, his daughter, now my old friend, dreamed that she saw her father, grown very beautiful in appearance, but still himself, in a large hall, which appeared to her like the vestibule of some palace: she asked him how he was, and he answered, pointing to a closed door: *"So well! But nothing to what I shall be when I pass that door!"* Nothing else happened until the anniversary of his death, when he appeared again to his daughter in a dream, and said to her: *"Beppina, go to Carolina, and tell her that I have received my crown!"* On awaking, she went immediately to tell her mother, who was much comforted. A little later, as they sat at their breakfast, Violante, the servant, came in to see them; and the first words that she said, were: "I could not help coming to-day to tell the mistress about my dream! Last night in my sleep I saw the padrone, and he said to me: *'Violante, go to Carolina, and tell her that I have received my crown!'*" I could go on, almost indefinitely, telling you stories about dreams, but I think I have told you as much as you will care to hear at once; and besides, I want you to receive this letter on New Year's morning, and you will not, unless I bring it to an end.

[1] [For a pretty story of Edwige's "Knitting for Cesira," see below, p. 311.]

[2] [The statues of Arnolfo di' Cambio and Filippo Brunelleschi at the S. portal of the Duomo, by Luigi Pampaloni (1830).]

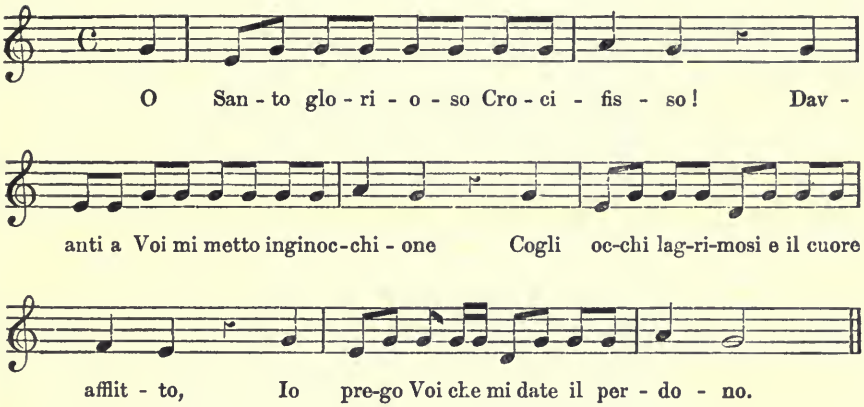
THE STORY OF EDWIGE'S CHILDREN

The other day at the Orphan Asylum,[1] as Edwige sat with the dear old Superior by my side (they have become great friends) she told her something about her children which she had never told me before, at least not with all the particulars. Once in her life, less than two years after her husband's death, when Clementina was not quite eleven, and little Tonina just beginning to run about alone, she was obliged to leave her home for a month. She had to do what work came to her hand—she could not choose; and what she had to do that month was to go to Livorno, with a family who wanted her to wait on a sick child. It was not all for gain that she did it; the family were neighbours of hers, and had been kind to her, and she had already been employed in serving the poor little creature, and it had grown so fond of her that it pined when away from her; so gratitude and compassion joined with the necessities of her family in sending her away. Before she went she put into Clementina's hand the money—very little indeed—which was to last the family while she was away. She could not write, but she made the money up into various little parcels, and said to her daughter: "This is for bread, and this for oil, and this for salt," etc. And then she recommended the four little sisters to her care, and left them, all alone in the house for a month! It was a sad month for her, worse even than she had expected; and all the worse that she and the children could not write to each other. Sometimes it used to seem to her that the suspense, and the longing for her children, were more than she could bear; toward the end of the month she was so reduced that she could neither eat nor sleep. (And *thirty francs* were what she received for this month of Purgatory!) When they returned to Florence they arrived late in the evening, and her employers pressed her to stay with them until the morning, but her impatience was too great, and she hurried home on foot alone, without waiting even for a moment's rest. It was well that she did so. A man-servant, who had come up from Livorno two days before, had told the children that she was coming. And when, past midnight, she came in sight of her home, what did she see? In the deserted Piazza, on the little green in front of the Church of S. Francesco, her five children were all standing out in the moonlight, looking for her. I leave you to imagine what a happy meeting that was! When she went into the house she found it all swept and cleaned as well as any women could have done it: and Clementina went and brought her all the folded papers in which she had left the money for their different expenses, and there were still a few pieces of copper left in each. Out of their great poverty the little creatures had saved something to give to their mother at her return!

[1] [For an account by Francesca of this orphan asylum at Bassano, see the last Letter of *Fors Clavigera* (Vol. XXIX. pp. 519–527), and see below, p. 283. Drawings of it by Miss Alexander are at Newnham College: see above, p. 48.]

PREGHIERA DELLA SERA

(EVENING PRAYER)*



A LETTO, a letto me ne vo,
L'anima mia a DIO la do,
La do a DIO e a San Giovanni,
Chè il nemico non m'inganni,
Nè di giorno nè di notte,
Nè al punto della morte,—
Tre o quattr' angeli di DIO,
Tutti intorno al letto mio,
Due da' piedi e due da capo,
GESU CRISTO al mio lato.

GESU CRISTO, Lui mi disse,
Che vegliasse, che dormisse,
Che paura non avesse,
Nè de' morti nè de' vivi,
Nè di spiriti cattivi.

* From time immemorial the contadini have lain down to rest after their hard day's work comforted by this little prayer, or by something like it—for I have found almost as many versions of it as I have families. And the mothers still teach it to the children. Addio, Lettore.—F.[1]

[1] [Ruskin gives only part of the prayer, which is on leaves 111 and 112 of the original MS. book. Miss Alexander's note therein is as above down to

Signor, mi metto giù,
La levata non lo so:
Se si levasse l'anima avanti il corpo,
Gesu mio, datemi conforto.

Now I go to rest, and pray
God to watch and not to leave me:
And Saint John beside me stay,
Lest the enemy deceive me;
From whom keep me, night and day,
And when mortal life gives way.
Of God's angels three or four,
Round about my bed shall stand;
Two behind and two before,
Jesus Christ at my right hand.

Jesus Christ who doth me keep,
Told me both to wake and sleep,
Bid me rest, and have no dread,
Of the living or the dead,
Nor should spirits foul alarm me,
For He will not let them harm me.

I lay me down to rest and close my eyes,
I know not what the rising up may be:
But if my soul before my body rise,
Lord Jesus, be Thou near to comfort me.

"children." It then continues: "It appears to be only a collection of old fragments, in two or three different measures, and the chant is varied in singing to suit the words."

The following are the first lines of the Prayer, as given in the original book, omitted by Ruskin:—

"O Santo glorioso Crocifisso!
Davanti a Voi mi metto inginocchione
Cogli occhi lagrimosi e il cuore afflitto,
Io prego Voi che mi date il perdono.
Se in questa notte la mia morte fusse
scritta,
Morir vorrei alla Vostra passione.
Ma non guardar alla mia nimicizia,
Gesù, misericordia e non giustizia!
Voi siete in cielo, io sono in terra;
Per Vostro amore bacio la terra.
Terra bacio e terra sono;
Gesù mio Vi chiedo perdono."

"O crucified Redeemer, to Thy feet
I come to-night, and, as I kneel to pray,
With tearful eyes and humble heart entreat
That Thou wilt pardon all my sins to-day.
And if to-night must end my mortal breath,
Then let me die, Lord, thinking on Thy
death.
My pride, my sin, remember Thou no more;
'Tis mercy, and not justice, I implore!
On earth am I, and Thou in heaven above;
I kiss the earth, Lord Jesus, for Thy love.
I kiss the earth, and earth itself am I:
Have pity on me from Thy throne on
high."]

APPENDIX TO "ROADSIDE SONGS"

ADDITIONAL RISPETTI AND OTHER SONGS[1]

"I will print separately," said Ruskin in his Preface (above, pp. 51–52), "all the music, and the little short songs called Rispetti, in their native Italian and Francesca's English." For specimens of the music, added in this volume, see pp. 102, 152, 176, 184, 187, 197. The Rispetti, not given by Ruskin in *Roadside Songs*, are contained in this Appendix, and two other pieces are also added.

Of the Additional Rispetti, No. i. is from the same leaf of the original book which contains two songs given by Ruskin ("You ask me for a song" and "O dove with wings of silver"). It is in Tigri's collection: No. 555.

No. ii. is the fourth of the "Songs of Country Loves": see above, p. 213.

Nos. iii.–vi. are on leaf 71 of the original MS. book (see the synopsis, above, p. 46). No. iii. is in Tigri's collection, No. 144.

To No. vii. (leaf 72) Miss Alexander has the following note in the original book:—

> "'A glass from your own mirror' is a play on the word *spera*, which, besides mirror, signifies hope. So, when they wish to say that hope is deceitful, they say, 'Si rompono le spere'; that is, 'Mirrors break.'"

Nos. viii. and ix. are on leaf 73. The songs are in Tigri: Nos. 749, 1150.

No. x. is on leaf 102, which contains also the song given above, p. 128 *n.* The song is No. 535 in Tigri, and a translation of it is on p. 78 of Miss Stretell's *Spanish and Italian Folk Songs*.

Nos. xi. and xii. are on leaf 105. No. xi. is No. 300 in Tigri.

Nos. xiii. and xiv. are on leaf 108, where Miss Alexander says:—

> "These two rispetti, both from Tigri's collection [Nos. 541 and 484], are of a different character from any of the others, and seem to express the love of a poor man for a woman of higher condition than his own."

Nos. xv. and xvi. are on leaf 115, where Miss Alexander has the following note:—

> "The first of these rispetti was taught me by Beatrice di Pian degli Ontani, and was one of her favourite songs; the second is from Tigri's collection [No. 1145]."

Nos. xvii. and xviii. are on leaf 116, where the note is:—

> "Both these rispetti are from Tigri's collection [Nos. 463 and 21]. The first, giving a contadino's account of what he would wish for in a wife, seems to be incomplete, but I have copied what there is of it, for curiosity."

No. xix. is added from leaf No. 58 in the synopsis (see p. 45).

The "Hymn to the Cross," by Beato Leonardo da Porto Manzrizio, referred to above (p. 59), is on leaves 117 and 118, where Miss Alexander has the following note:—

> "Beato Leonardo, a Franciscan, who died in 1751 at the age of seventy-five, was the author of many popular hymns, of which this is perhaps the favourite. I have preserved only a few verses; the original is very long; it is always sung by the assembled people at the raising of a new cross in a country parish. The Beato Leonardo is, in a peculiar manner, the poet of the poor, as in life he was their preacher, walking barefoot from town, and preaching with wonderful power, calling men to repentance, like John the Baptist."

[1] [Additional verses have also been given on pp. 160, 199, 234 *n.*]

ADDITIONAL RISPETTI

I

Credevo che l'amor fosse un bel giuoco
Quando l'incominciai a praticare
M'è riuscito una fiamma di fuoco,
Che non la spegneria l'acqua del mare.

II

E quando sarò morto piangerai;
E tutt' i giorni alla messa verrai.
E arriverai a quell' oscura fossa,
E l'acqua benedetta mi darai.
Dirai allora: ecco lì quell' ossa,
Di quell' amante che tanto straziai.
Dirai allora: ecco qui il mio bene
E lui è morto, e a me morir conviene.

III

Le cose piccoline son pur belle,
Le cose piccoline son pur care!
Ponete mente come son le perle,
Son piccoline, ma si fan pagare.
Ponete mente come son le stelle,
Son piccoline, ma rilucenti e belle.
Ponete mente come l'è la rosa,
E piccolina, ma tanto odorosa.

IV

Giovanottino piccolo e bassetto,
Quanta grazia avete nel parlare!
L'amor non si misura col passetto,
Non v'è stadera ove si può pesare.
E non si trova stadera nè bilancia,
E di pesar l'amor non c'è l'usanza;
E non si trova stadera nè pesatore,
Non c'è l'usanza di pesar l'amore.

ADDITIONAL RISPETTI

I

I THOUGHT that love would be a pretty game,
And so I tried it once—alas for me!
And now no power on earth can stay this flame,
Nor quench it all the water of the sea.

II

WHEN I am dead, and earth my dust shall keep,
Each morning wilt thou come to mass alone,
And stand above the dark grave where I sleep
And sprinkle holy water on the stone,
And sadly say, Here lie the ashes spent
Of one whom I on earth did much torment.
Yes, wilt thou say, 'tis here my love doth lie;
And he is dead, and I, too, soon must die.

III

OH, little things are beautiful to see!
Oh, little things most precious do appear!
Think on the pearls, what little things they be,
Yet worn with so much pride, and cost so dear!
Think on the stars that light the heavens at night,
How small they are, and yet they shine so bright!
Think on the rose, so lovely in its bloom,
A little flower, but sheds a great perfume!

IV

O LAD of form so slight and stature small,
In all thy words thou hast a wondrous grace!
Oh, love was never weighed in scales at all,
Nor measured by the foot in any place.
The scales for love have never yet been made,
And ne'er by mortal man shall love be weighed.
No measure can be found, nor man so wise,
To tell of love the height and breadth and size.

V

O SOL che te ne vai, che te ne vai!
O sol che te ne vai su per que' poggi!
Fammelo un bel piacer se tu potrai,
Salutami il mio amor, non l'ho visto oggi.
O sol che te ne vai su per que' peri,
Salutameli un po' quegli occhi neri:
O sol che te ne vai su per gli ornelli,
Salutameli un po' quegli occhi belli.

VI

BELLA, che m' hai lasciato, e non son morto;
E mi si leva il sole benchè sera:
E la mi nave l'è rivata al porto
Si ben che l'è mancata la tua vela.
E la mi' nave al porto l'è arrivata,
Si ben che la tua vela l'è mancata.

VII

È TANTO tempo ch' io desideravo
D'avere un vetro della vostra spera!
È tanto tempo amor che ti bramavo
Che dì lassarti mio pensier non era.
Se potesse parlar quella finestra,
Quanti discorsi noi fatti ci abbiamo!
Che sia dì d'affare, o dì di festa,
E quante volte impromessi ci siamo!
E s' io sapessi qual fosse il mio amore
Non ci lasserem più, venga chi vuole.
E se sapessi qual fosse l'amor mio
Non ci lasserem più nè voi nè io.

VIII

COLOMBA bianca, vestita di nero,
A chi la porti, tanta vedovanza?
E par che il Ciel ti sia venuto meno,
E par che tu abbia perso ogni speranza.
Ma mon l'avrai perduto se vorrai.
Sei stato il primo e l'ultimo sarai.

IX

O CARA terra!
Terra che ne rinserri l'amor mio!
Quando sarà finita la mia guerra
Fra le tue zolle vo' venire anch' io;
Io vo' venire dove sta il mio amore,
Dov' ora è seppellito questo cuore.
E dove sta il mio amore, vo' venire;
Senza del cuore e troppo il mio patire.

V

O SUN that sinkest low, that sinkest low;
That goest down behind the hills away;
Do me one favour, sun, as thou dost go:
Salute my love, we have not met to-day.
O sun, just setting where those pear trees rise,
Salute for me, I pray thee, those black eyes.
O sun, behind the poplars lost to sight,
Salute those eyes so beautiful and bright.

VI

LOVE, thou didst leave me, yet I am not dead;
My sun still rises though 'tis close of day;
And into harbour safe my ship was led,
Although thy sail had failed it on the way.
Thy sail was wanting, but the voyage is past,
And safe in harbour stands the ship at last.

VII

LONG time ago my heart did first aspire
A glass from your own mirror to obtain,
And ever since has known but one desire,
Nor changed, nor ever dreamed of change again.
Oh, if that little window could but tell
How many times we met there, you and I!
On Sundays, yes, and working days as well;
What promises they heard, those days gone by!
Unless my heart did strangely me deceive,
Nor you nor I this love can ever leave.
And if I knew my love, and what 'twas worth,
No power can part us now in all the earth.

VIII

WHITE dove in black attire, how changed thou art!
For whom this widowhood? For whom these tears?
Has heaven failed thee? Is thy weary heart
So dark that ne'er one ray of hope appears?
Yet wouldst thou take it, there were hope for thee.
Thou wast the first love, thou the last shalt be.

IX

SAFE home to rest in, after restless life!
Dear earth, who dost my only love enclose!
When finished is my labour and my strife,
Amid thy clods how gladly I'll repose!
I long to come, for much have I to bear:
There lies my love, my widowed heart lies there.
My heart is there, and why should I remain?
Alone on earth, too heavy grows my pain.

X

E QUANTO tempo ho perso per amarte!
Egli era meglio avessi amato Dio.
In Paradiso n'avere' una parte,
Qualche Santo averei dal lato mio.
E per amarvi, voi, fresco bel viso,
Io mi ritrovo fuor del Paradiso.
E per amarvi, voi, fresca viola,
Del Paradiso mi ritrovo fuora.

XI

IERSERA posi un giglio alla finestra,
Iersera il misi e stamattina è nato.
Andai per affacciarmi alla finestra,
Colle sue fronde mi cuopriva il capo.
Giglio, mio giglio, quanto sei cresciuto!
Ricordati del ben che t'ho voluto.
Giglio, mio giglio, quanto sei crescente!
Ricordati del ben che ti vo' sempre.

XII

DENTRO al mio petto è una candela accesa,
Di dentro brucia e di fuori non pare.
Se c'è qualcun ch' abbia provato amore,
Abbia pietà del mio 'nfiammato cuore.

XIII

SON nato poverino, e non son degno
A vagheggiar sì nobil creatura:
La povertà la guasta ogni disegno,
Ch' io mi son messo troppo in grand' altura.
Ma io per gentilezza vi vo' amare,
E tu per povertà non mi lasciare.

XIV

E NON son degno già che degno sia,
Fatemi degno voi col vostro amore!
È tanto al basso la persona mia,
Meriti dámi di maggior valore;
Meriti dámi di maggior richezza.
Amami, bella mia, per gentilezza.

X

How long a time I've wasted in thy love!
I wish I'd spent it loving God instead.
A seat would then be mine in heaven above,
Beside some saint with glory round his head.
But for the love I bore thee, fresh fair face,
In heaven's glory is for me no place;
And for the love, sweet flower, I bore to thee,
In heaven's glory is no place for me.

XI

I SET a lily at my window high;
Last night I set it, and this morn 'twas grown.
I went to look, but scarce could see the sky;
My head was shaded by its leaves alone.
Lily, my lily, oh how fast you grow!
Remember how much love you do me owe.
Lily, my lily, blooming out so fair,
Remember all the love I do you bear!

XII

A LIGHTED candle in my heart doth shine;
It burns within, yet gives without no sign.
Hath any loved in silence? Then may he
Think on my kindled heart, and pity me.

XIII

So lowly born, I am not fit to gaze
Thus fondly on that fair and noble face,
And poverty forbids, when love doth raise
My heart unthinking to such lofty place;
But since thy gentle soul is all I prize,
For poverty thou wilt not me despise.

XIV

I AM not worthy of thy love, but still
Thy love can make me worthy if it will.
Beneath thee far, of small account am I:
Thou wouldst deserve some lover great and high,
From me all different; yet—though far apart—
Yet love me, in the kindness of thy heart.

XV

Mi misi a fabbricar un bel castello,
Credevo d'esser solo castellano.
Quando che l'ebbi fabbricato e bello,
Mi fur levate le chiavi di mano.
Sopra alla porta han messo un cartello
Che chi l'ha fabbricato stia lontano.
Ed io meschino che lo fabbricai
Con pianti e con dolor or lo lassai.
Ed io meschino che l'ho fabbricato
Con pianti e con dolor or l'ho lassato.

XVI

Quando son morto, copritemi di fiori
E sotto terra non mi ci mettete.
Mettetemi di là, da quelle mura
Dove più volte visto mi avete.
Lassami là, all' acqua e al vento,
Che se muoio per te, muoio contento.
Lassami là, all' acqua e al sole,
Che se muoio per te, muoio d'amore.

XVII

Anch' io vo' moglie, e la vo' contadina,
E che non abbia più di quindici anni.
Almen la piglio, voglio sia bellina,
Sappia stare al telaro e cucir panni,
Sollecita ad alzarsi la mattina,
Mi voglia bene, e non mi faccia inganni.

XVIII

Udite là quel rossignol che canta?
Col suo bel canto lamentarsi vuole.
Così son io, se qualche volta canto,
Canta la lingua, e addolorato è il cuore;
Canta la lingua, e il cuore è addolorato,
Chi mi voleva bene or m'ha lasciato.

XIX

Sete una violina del mio orto,
E una speranza sete del cuor mio;
Vo' sete il mio desire, il mio conforto,
Sete un fiorin di quanti n' ho amat' io.
Quanti n' ho amati e quanti ne vo' amare,
Tutti per vostro amor li vo' lassare.
Quanti ne ho amati e quanti n' amerei,
Tutti per vostro amor li lasserei.

XV

I BUILT a castle; it was all my own.
I made it strong and beautiful and grand;
But when I thought to be its lord alone,
The keys were taken from the builder's hand.
And this inscription stands above the door:
That he who built it should approach no more.
And I, poor I, who built it with great pain,
May never, never pass that door again.
And I, poor I, who built it with great cost,
With tears have left it, all my labour lost.

XVI

WHEN I am dead, lay not above my face
The cold black earth, but cover me with flowers,
And lay me in that green and quiet place
Where near thy side I passed some happy hours.
And there, in rain and sunshine, let me lie;
For thy sweet love am I content to die.
There let the sunshine and the rain descend;
Who dies for thee has made a happy end.

XVII

I WANT a wife, a contadina bride;
At fifteen years, no more, I'll make her mine.
A pretty face I want, and what beside?
To rise up early, ere the sun can shine;
With ready hand to sew and spin and weave;
And heart to love me well and not deceive.

XVIII

HEARD you that music through the branches ring?
The nightingale did in that song lament.
'Tis so with me, if now and then I sing;
The tongue sings, but the heart is ill content.
The tongue sings, but the heart with grief runs o er,
For he who loved me loves me now no more.

XIX

A VIOLET of my garden, all my own,
A precious hope deep hidden in my heart;
My joy, my comfort, my desire alone,
The flower of all I ever loved thou art.
And all I ever loved or sought before,
Since thou art mine, I'll never think no more.
Nor could I aught so fair and pleasant find,
But for thy love I'd leave it all behind.

LAUDE ALLA SANTA CROCE

Evviva la croce, la croce evviva!
Evviva la croce e chi l'esaltò.
La croce diletta, da pochi bramata,
Fa l'alma beata di chi la cercò.
Evviva la croce, etc.

Ogniuno contempli la pianta gradita,
Che frutto di vita al mondo recò.

Tu fosti l'altare di vittima grata,
Che al Padre immolata, per noi lo placò.

Tu cettedra fosti, da cui sua divina
Celeste dottrina Gesù c' insegnò.

Con sommo trionfo in cielo esaltata,
Di luce adornata, un dì ti vedrò.

Sarai per gli eletti dolcezza e contento;
Affanno e spavento per chi ti sprezzò.

Da te, croce santa, io voglio conforto,
Allor che risorto da morte sarò.

Tue lodi nel cielo fuor d'ogni timore,
Allora di cuore con canti dirò.

Lodando in eterno coll' alma beata,
Te, croce esaltata, e Chi ti esaltò.
Evviva la croce, etc.

HYMN TO THE CROSS

Thrice blessed be the cross for evermore,
And blessed He who first its burden bore.
The cross beloved, though few to seek it care,
Will bless the soul of him who doth it bear.
La croce evviva!

Come, contemplate this tree of wondrous worth,
Which fruit of life hath borne for all the earth.

Thou art the altar where our Lamb was slain,
The Father's peace for our lost souls to gain.

And thou the pulpit, whence our Master taught
That precious doctrine which from heaven He brought.

In glory and in triumph, raised on high,
One day shall I behold thee in the sky.

A sign of peace to all believing eyes,
Of fear and woe to all who thee despise.

For comfort, holy cross, I turn to thee,
When from my grave uprisen I shall be.

And then in heaven, all fear and danger o'er,
My heart shall sing thy praise for evermore.

Still praising, with the saved above the sky,
The cross, and Him who raised the cross so high.
La croce evviva!

PER LA NATIVITÀ DI NOSTRO SIGNORE

Tu scendi dalle stelle o Re del Cielo
E vieni in una grotta al freddo al gelo.
O Bambino mio divino,
Io ti vedo qui tremar—o Dio beato!
E quanto ti costò l' avermi amato!

Tu lasci del tuo Padre il divin seno,
Per venir a penar su questo fieno.
Dolce amore del mio cuore,
Dolce amore ti transporto. O Gesù mio!
Perchè tanto patù per amor mio?

Tu dormir, o dolce amor, ma intanto il cuore
Non dorme no, ma sveglia, a tutto l' ore.
O mio bello e puro aguello
A che pensi dimmi Tu
O amore immenso!
A morire per te, risponde, io penso.

Ed a mori per me Tu pensi, o Dio,
E ch' altro amare fuor di Te poss' io?
O Maria, speranza mia
S' io poc' amo il tuo Gesù
Non ti sdegnare!
Amalo tu per me, s' io non so amare.

A Te, che sei del mondo il Creatore,
Mancano panni e fuoco, o mio Signore!
Pargoletto mio diletto, quanto questa povertà
Più m' innamora!
Giacchè ti fece amor povero ancora.

Me se fu il tuo volere il tuo soffrire,
Perchè vuoi pianger sì, perchè vagire?
O diletto del mio petto, mio Gesù, t' intendo, sì,
O mio Signore!
Tu piangi, non per duol, ma per amore.

Tu piangi, per vederti, da me ingrato,
Dopo sì grand' amor, si poco amato!
Gesù mio, amato Dio, se già un tempo fu così,
Or Te sol bramo!
Caro, non pianger, no, ch' io t' amo, io t' amo.

CHRISTMAS HYMN OF FIUMALBO[1]

O KING of heaven! from the stars come down,
This frosty night, to Bethlehem's humble town!
O Babe divine, I see Thee tremble here.
O God! Thy love for me hath cost Thee dear.

Thy Father's bosom hast Thou left, to lay
Thy head, O King of glory, on this hay!
Where hath love brought thee, Lord? And what doth make
Thee suffer so, belovèd, for my sake?

Thou sleepest, O belovèd, but Thy heart
Sleeps not, but watches still where'er Thou art.
O Lamb divine! if one Thy thoughts could see!
I think, He says, how I shall die for thee.

Shall die for me! O God, and what am I?
And what my love, in face of love so high?
Come, Mary, on thy heart thy Jesus hold,
And love Him more, the more our love grows cold.

Thou hast created all things; can it be
That clothes and fire are wanting, Lord, to Thee?
Such want doth bring Thee near me, for I know
'Twas my want first that made Thee love me so!

Yet dost Thou suffer of Thine own free will.
Then why these tears? why dost Thou tremble still?
Hope of my heart! I know what doth Thee move!
Thou weepest, not for sorrow, but for love.

Thou weepest, after love so great, to see
Thyself, alas, so little loved by me!
It was so once; but weep no more, I pray!
My heart is Thine, and only Thine, to-day.

[1] [For the note on this hymn, see above, p. 199 *n.*]

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[1] [Including three Rispetti in *Christ's Folk.*]

III

CHRIST'S FOLK IN THE APENNINE

(1887–1889)

CHRIST'S FOLK

IN THE APENNINE.

REMINISCENCES
OF HER FRIENDS
AMONG THE TUSCAN PEASANTRY.

BY

FRANCESCA ALEXANDER.

EDITED BY

JOHN RUSKIN, D.C.L.,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND HONORARY FELLOW OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD.

GEORGE ALLEN,
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.
1887.

[*Bibliographical Note.*—This work has been issued in three forms :—(1) in seven Parts, Parts i.–vi. forming volume i.; and the seventh Part being Part i. of an intended volume ii. (2) The first six Parts were bound together as a volume. (3) The whole seven Parts were, after Ruskin's death, collected into a volume.

(1) ORIGINAL ISSUE IN PARTS

Part I. First Edition (March 2, 1887).—The title-page of the Part was as follows :—

> Christ's Folk | in the Apennine. | Reminiscences | of her friends | among the Tuscan Peasantry. | By | Francesca Alexander. | Edited by | John Ruskin, D.C.L., | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Honorary Fellow of | Corpus Christi College, Oxford. | I. | The Peace of Polissena. | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1887.

Foolscap 8vo, pp. viii. + 46. Half-title (with blank reverse), pp. i.–ii. Title-page (with imprint on the reverse, "Printed by Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ld., London and Aylesbury"), pp. iii.–iv. Preface, pp. v.–viii. Text, pp. 1–46.

Issued in pale grey paper wrappers, with a title-page (omitting the sub-title and adding the *Rose*) repeated upon the front, enclosed in a single ruled frame—the words "*Price One Shilling*" being added below the frame.

These descriptions apply *mutatis mutandis* to all the other Parts. 2000 copies.

Second Edition (January 1896).—300 copies.

Part II. First Edition (March 2, 1887).—Pp. 47–70 : "Pensatevi Voi!" 2000 copies.

Second Edition (January 1900).—50 copies.

Part III. First Edition (June 7, 1887).—Pp. 71–126. "The Mother of the Orphans," pp. 71–124. "Nominal Index to Part III.," pp. 125–126. 1000 copies.

Most of this Part had already been printed in *Fors Clavigera* (see below, p. 283).

Second Edition (June 1889).—975 copies.

Part IV. First Edition (November 1887).—Pp. 127–176. "The Nun's School in Florence," pp. 127–174. "Nominal Index to Part IV.," pp. 175–176. 1000 copies.

Second Edition (June 1889).—925 copies.

Part V. First Edition (November 1887).—Pp. 177–220. "Addio, Cara!" pp. 177–218. "Nominal Index to Part V.," pp. 219–220. 1000 copies.

Second Edition (June 1889).—900 copies.

Part VI. First Edition (November 1887).—Pp. 221–264. "Lieti Andiamo," pp. 221–261. P. 262, blank. "Nominal Index to Part VI.," pp. 263–264.

Second Edition (June 1889).—925 copies.

Vol. II. Part I. (April 1889).—The title-page of this was as follows :—

> Christ's Folk | in the Apennine. | Reminiscences | of her friends | among the Tuscan Peasantry. | By | Francesca Alexander. | Edited by | John Ruskin, D.C.L., | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Honorary Fellow of | Corpus Christi College, Oxford. | Volume II. | I. | Giannina Singing. | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1889.

Foolscap 8vo, pp. ii. + 46. Issued as before. 1000 copies were printed.

No further Parts were issued.

(2) FIRST EDITION IN VOLUME FORM (PARTS I.–VI.)

This consisted of the first Six Parts, bound up with a new title-page (in substitution for the title-pages of the Parts), and with two added pages (ix., x.) giving "Contents." The title-page was as shown here on p. 251.

Issued in green cloth boards, lettered across the back, "Christ's | Folk | in the | Apennine | By | Francesca | Alexander." Price 7s. (reduced in March 1893 to 5s.).

(3) NEW EDITION IN VOLUME FORM (PARTS I.–VII.)

This (issued in 1901, after Ruskin's death) consisted of the Seven Parts, with a new Index and Frontispiece. The title-page is :—

> Christ's Folk in the | Apennine. | Reminiscences | of her friends | among the Tuscan Peasantry. | By | Francesca Alexander. | Edited by | John Ruskin, D.C.L., | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Honorary Fellow | of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. | With Frontispiece. | Fifth Thousand. | London : | George Allen, 156, Charing Cross Road. | 1901.

Foolscap 8vo, pp. x. + 242. Half-title (with blank reverse), pp. i.–ii. Title-page, p. iii. At the foot of the reverse are the words "[*All rights reserved*]," and in the centre, the following "Editor's Note, 1901" :—

> At the date of Mr. Ruskin's death only one part of the second volume of this book had been issued. This is now added at the close of the volume, together with a full nominal index in place of the indices to parts 3–6. All the foot-notes (except those signed ED. 1901) are by Mr. Ruskin, and thus the initials "J. R.," occasionally but not uniformly added to them in previous editions, are now omitted as surplusages.

Preface, pp. v.–vii. ; p. viii., blank. Contents, pp. ix.–x. Text, pp. 1–232. Index, pp. 233–242. At the foot of the last page is the imprint—"Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co. | Edinburgh & London." Only two notes were added by the editor—a reference to the Index and an erroneous reference to *Præterita*.

Issued in green cloth boards, uniform with the "Small Edition" of Ruskin's works, lettered on the back, "Ruskin | Christ's | Folk | in the | Apennine | Francesca | Alexander." Price 5s. (reduced in January 1904 to 3s. 6d.). 1000 copies.

In the present volume, the book is printed consecutively, as in the edition last described. The index, however, in that edition had no relation to those prepared by Ruskin himself. It omitted many of his entries, and in the case of other entries, omitted his characteristic notes. On the other hand, it included irrelevant entries (such as "F's pen" and "Illinois"). In the present volume, therefore, the four indices made by him have been collected, and they have been completed by the addition of entries, on similar lines, from Parts 1, 2, and 7. The Index has been further extended so as to include persons mentioned in *Roadside Songs of Tuscany*. Many of the persons appear in both books.

On p. 265, line 29, "mio" has hitherto been misprinted "moi" ; and on p. 266 the date has hitherto been printed erroneously "1876." On p. 312, the ed. of 1901 gave in a note an erroneous reference to "*Præterita*, ii. § 44." The note has now been cancelled, and the true reference given.]

PREFACE

SINCE first I received from Miss Alexander the trusts involved in the editorship of the *Story of Ida* and *Songs of Tuscany*, she has been in the habit of writing to me little sketches or stories of her peasant friends, as they chance to visit her, either, as it often happens, for the simple pleasure of talking to her, or silently watching her at her work,—or, as it still oftener happens, when they seek her counsel in their troubles, or her sympathy in their good fortune. Her door is never closed to them; the drawing in progress advances under her hand with the same tranquillity through the children's babble and the mother's boast; and time is never wanting if they need her attentive care, or active help. Her letters usually contain at least a page or two of chat about the visitors who have been claiming her immediate notice, or some reminiscence of former passages between them, which the affectionate historian, finding me hardly less interested in her favourites than she was herself, and interested in the way she wished, gradually completed and developed, until now I find under my hand a series of word-portraits, finished as tenderly as her drawings, and of even higher value in their accuracy of penetration, for the written sketches contain little gleams of gentle satire which never occur in the drawings. And it seems to me that the best Christmas work I can do this year, (my own fields of occupation being also in great measure closed to me by the severe warning of recent illness and the languor it has left,) will be to gather out of this treasure of letters what part might, with the writer's permission, and without pain to any of her loved friends, be laid before those of the English public who have either seen enough of the Italian peasantry

to recognize the truth of these *ritratti*, or have respect enough for the faith of the incorrupt Catholic Church to admit the sincerity, and rejoice in the virtue, of a people still living as in the presence of Christ, and under the instant teaching of His saints and apostles. I shall change no word in the familiar language of the letters, nor attempt any other arrangement than that of merely collating the passages referring at intervals to the same person, nor even this with any strictness. For it is one of the pleasantest features in the tenor of these annals to have our friends coming to see us again at their different ages, and in their added dignities of possession or position.

The story with which I begin is, however, a little different from the others, having been written for me by Francesca in consequence of my complaint that the *Story of Ida* was too sad, and conceded too much to the modern feeling of the British public that people who are quite good have nothing to do but to die. The story of Polissena may perhaps never reach the same place in the reader's heart; but it is in the depth of it far more bravely and widely exemplary.

BRANTWOOD, *30th November*, 1886.

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CHRIST'S FOLK

I

THE PEACE OF POLISSENA

SEVERAL years ago—I should think about twelve—I used to see a party of three young people, strangers at Abetone, working in the woods; and they attracted my attention, because one of them was a girl who shared in all the boys' work, and seemed to take the general direction of whatever was done.

They used to lodge at night in the house of old Margherita of the Cima, and her blind son Fortunato;[1] and as I was in the habit, while Margherita lived, of going often to see her and listen to her stories, I soon made acquaintance with the young strangers.

The girl, Polissena, was then apparently about fourteen or fifteen years old, and she looked poor, and not very strong, and she was not in the least pretty, only she had a pretty smile, and her manners were gentle and modest. The two boys, one a little older and the other a little younger than herself, were her brothers; their father had lately died, and Polissena, being the energetic one of the family, had quite naturally stepped into his place as head.

What I have now to tell about her became known to me little by little, in the course of all the years that have passed since; and though her life is one of few events, I think it is worth writing down, if only for the reason that she seems to me, taking her whole life together, to be the happiest person whom I ever knew.

This morning I have had a visit from her, and have been asking her many questions about herself; and her answers to them, and what I have heard of her from others, will enable me to tell the story connectedly. One question I could not ask her: I know that away somewhere near the beginning of Polissena's life there was some terrible tragedy; but I do not rightly know what it was.

The neighbours call her "La Bruciata," and she bears the mark of some frightful accident. One of her hands has been so injured by the fire as to have hardly the shape of a hand at all, so that she has been cut off from every kind of "woman's work": she cannot sew, nor knit, nor spin; nobody would take her for a servant, nobody will ever marry her. And I have known some, less afflicted than she, who have lived on charity, or been burdens on their families. But she began, when a very little girl, to share her brothers' work; and used to go with them into the woods to collect weeds for the horses, or wood for the house.

[1] [See *Roadside Songs;* above, p. 149.]

Her father went *trapelo*, as they say here: that is, he lived at Ponte a Cutigliano, just at the foot of the steep ascent to l'Abetone, and he kept one or two large strong horses, which could be fastened to any wagon or carriage, in front of whatever horses there might be already, and would help drag it to the highest part of the road; the owner walking along beside them all the way.

When Polissena's father died, *she* used to go *trapelo*, taking turns with her elder brother; the great strong horses would obey her voice perfectly.

As she said to me this morning, when I asked her how the horses all came to be so obedient:

"My brothers and I like our horses, and take good care of them, and never beat them; and the horses know, and will listen to everything we say. Some of the barocciai here beat and kick their horses; I cannot bear to see them; and the horses will not let them come near them if they can help it: horses know, just the same as Christians, when people are good to them."

She used to feed and take care of the horses, and at other times would go and load wood with the men; indeed, I had to wait for several days before I could have a visit from her, because she and her brother had an engagement loading beans. She has passed her life doing men's work of the roughest sort, and must, I should think, be often in the roughest sort of company; and I should have supposed that if anything would take all the womanliness out of a woman, it would be such a life as that.

But now I come to just what I wanted to say about Polissena, and what some one else will have to explain, for I cannot: her strange rough life has neither injured her, nor made her unhappy. She is singularly gentle and refined in manner, and I should think in character; never feels herself degraded by her work or her surroundings, or envies other women who are, or seem to be, less unfortunate;—indeed, she would be very much surprised if she should hear that any one considered her unfortunate at all.

People call her "piuttosto bellina," yet there is not a good feature in her face, and sun and wind have made her complexion more like that of a sailor than a woman: there is really nothing good-looking about her, excepting a graceful though rather meagre little figure, and white regular teeth; she has a pinched, poverty-stricken face, as of one who has suffered in childhood. And yet people like to look at her! She does look good, and kind, and truthful, and I can see that she grows better-looking with time, as very good people usually do; and there is a certain placid happiness in her face, which makes it very pleasant to look at, in spite of its plainness. She has the softest, sweetest voice that ever was given to a woman, and much grace of manner. This grace, indeed, is common to a great many of the mountain women, but Polissena has something more, in her real kindness of heart, and interest in all those about her. She is not a great talker, being too busy for gossip, but when I do have a chance to talk with her, she always says something that I like to remember. If she asks a favour of any one, she always asks it "Per amor mio!" and such an appeal, made in the full confidence that everybody loves her, just as she loves everybody, seldom fails.

I should have supposed that her life would have been the harder to

Polissena

her for the very reason that she is so very "womanly" in taste and character, so fond of everything pretty and peaceful. But the womanly side of her nature finds an outlet in her love of flowers. In the steep hillside garden behind her house, where she raises beans and potatoes for the family, and does more work, it seems to me sometimes, with her one available hand, than any two men with a good pair of hands each, Polissena has her flower garden,—quite an "institution" in that part of the country,—where she raises a great variety of really beautiful flowers. I ought to know something about it; for every now and then some passer-by leaves a basket at our door, and when I open it I know in a minute who sent it. First a layer of chestnut leaves, to keep out the sun, and under that a pile of flowers, laid carefully, so as not to hurt each other: splendid roses and carnations, and other choice flowers, and with them some of the more beautiful of the wild flowers that grow about Cutigliano; and under these the basket half full of beans, or cherries, or new potatoes, as the case may be, with always a little bunch of sweet herbs for the soup;—really a valuable present in this place, where *nothing* is to be bought.

I asked her if the men among whom she was obliged to work were never uncivil or profane. She said that they had never been uncivil to *her;* that they would not be so to any girl who was quiet and minded her own business; but she acknowledged that they were often profane. "I wonder," she said, "how they can speak bad words of the Almighty, as they do, and then, as soon as they are in any trouble, be asking Him to help them. But of course they have no one else to go to. Who else *can* help us? It is just as if I should abuse you and call you names, and then when I wanted something, come and ask you to give it to me. I am sure you would not give me anything. God does help the people who abuse Him, because He is so good; but I think that He must like better to help the people that love Him." I said to her, "You seem to love Him." She answered, "Oh, yes, of course I love Him, because He has been so good to *me*" (with a little emphasis on the "me," as if she hardly supposed He could be quite so good to other people). "He gives me such good health, and He almost always gives me what I want if I ask Him, and He has helped me so often when I was in trouble!" I asked her if she never felt it hard to have to do such heavy work. She smiled, and said, "Oh, but it is such a pleasure to work when one has good health. I do not think there is anything else so pleasant as working! My sister—do you not know her? She is larger than I, and a great deal prettier, but she is not so strong, and she cannot do the sort of hard work that I can: she stays at home and helps my mother, or she goes to pick berries at the Cerchietto. But if she should have to go for berries to the Sassi Scritti, as I have to, sometimes, she would not be able to bear it. She thought of going to service at Pistoia, but we cannot bear to part with her, and really there is no need of it, for we have everything quite comfortable at home, and enough for all our wants."

I asked her what she meant by the Sassi Scritti, and she gave me quite an interesting account of them, which I will give as nearly as possible in her own words.

"Up over Pian degli Ontani there is a mountain, very hard even for

me to climb, that they call Sassi Scritti, because the rocks up at the top of the mountain have words cut in them. I cannot read them,—none of our people can. It is a different sort of writing from that which we know, but very beautiful to look at; and they say that the words were cut there by people who lived a very long time ago, nobody knows how long.

"I go there sometimes for blueberries, in the season when the dealers come up from Pistoia, and other places on the plain, to buy them; you know that they buy blueberries to make wine. One day I had gone there with a large party of people; we had climbed a great way, and picked a great many berries, when there came up a great storm, but really a terrible storm, with thunder and lightning, and a deluge of rain; so that we had to leave our berries and only think of saving ourselves. We were running towards some trees, thinking to take refuge under them; but there was an old man among us, a very good old man, and we generally did everything that he said; and he told us that we must not go under the trees, because the lightning would strike there, if it did anywhere; but that he would take us to a safe place. Then we climbed a little more, and he brought us to a place where the great rocks were piled together, and made a sort of cave, and he told us to go in. I was frightened at first—it was a beautiful place, but strange and fearful-looking, and I thought perhaps the lightning would come in after us; but he said there was no danger.

"So we waited there a long time, with the storm going on outside, and I looked at the rocks about us: they were all written with those strange words that none of us could read. But you cannot think how beautiful it all was! And late in the day, after the storm had cleared, the old man said:

"'We have lost our day's work; but if you like to come with me I will show you something worth seeing!'

"Then he made us climb just a little farther, and brought us to the crest of the mountain, and then he *did* show us something beautiful! Only it was all so strange! I never saw anything like it in my life! The land was spread out flat like water—I thought at first it *was* water. And far away, on this level land, I saw something white, as if a strip of white cloth had been laid on the ground; and the old man told us that was Florence!"

I asked Polissena to tell me a little about her family. She said that her eldest brother, whom I remembered having seen years ago, had lost his life in Sardegna.

"He went several years ago to Sardegna," she said, "and he had great fortune there. He entered the service of a very rich lady, who employed a great many workmen; and she liked my brother very much, and set him over the other workmen, and used to send him to pay them at the end of the week. And people knew that he had the money to pay the workmen, and they formed a plan to rob him. One pay-day they lay in wait for him at a lonely part of the road which he had to pass, and they fired upon him as he went by upon his horse, and so he died. You can imagine what a grief this was to all of us, to have him die so far from us, and in such a way! My poor brother—he was so good!

We had not seen him for two years, but all the money that he earned he used to send home to my mother. The people who killed him did not gain anything by it after all, for he had sent the money that day for the workmen by another hand."

By this time, seeing that her eyes were full of tears, I tried to lead her to speak of her mother and of her two younger brothers. I told her that it must be a great comfort to her mother to have a daughter who would work for her, and take care of her as she did.

"Oh," she said quickly, as if she did not like the idea of her mother being under obligation to her. "But my mother is so good! She is so good to me, and you cannot think how happy we are together!"

Her second brother, who has some employment out of the house, is married, and lives at Pian degli Ontani; Polissena is a little anxious about him and his young wife. She says: "I hope the good Lord will take care of them, and guide all their affairs for the best, but I never can see how they are going to live. I love my sister-in-law; really I love her in my heart, but I cannot understand her."

I asked her what it was that she found difficult of comprehension in the character of her brother's wife. She thought a little, for she is not used to putting her thoughts into words, then she said:

"She is poor, and I rather think she does not like to be poor; and she wants to behave as if she were rich: and you know if God has made us poor we *must* live like poor people. She does not like to work: I think she makes a mistake, I find work such a great pleasure, but of course people cannot all feel alike."

And now I will end this story, which is growing a great deal too long, by telling what she told me about an illness which this brother had, and his wonderful recovery, a year or so before his marriage.

"My brother, the one who works for a master, had been travelling a long way with the horses, and he was very warm and tired. When night came on he lay down and slept under the open sky, on the damp ground; it was a cold night, and he took an illness which almost brought him to his grave. The doctor gave him over, the priest came and gave him the last sacraments, and we were expecting him to die every hour, when it pleased the Lord to give him back to us in a very wonderful way. He was lying insensible, as we thought, breathing very slowly, and he looked like one already dead. The evening had come, and they all said he would not see the morning; the priest was waiting to help him with his prayers at the last moment, and a neighbour had come to stay with him through the night, for my mother could not stay in the room. I went in to look once more at my poor brother, and the priest was just telling me that it was all as good as over, he would never revive again; when, as I bent over his face, he opened his eyes, and I saw that he knew me. And he said, in a voice so faint that I could hardly hear it, 'Stay with me.' Then his eyes closed again, and I thought, 'I shall die too.' But I would not leave him, and I sat down by his side. I sat there a great while. After a long time the priest and the neighbour went away for a while (they used to go out into the air sometimes for fear of contagion), and I was left alone with my brother. While I was alone with him his breathing changed: he began to draw long breaths with pauses between, as if they were the very

last. And I—I suppose I was out of my head. I did not rightly know what I was doing, but it was that feeling that I must do something. I took up a bottle of vinegar that was on the table, and bathed his forehead with it. As soon as I had done so, the priest and the other man came back again. They came to look at him, and they began to say, 'His forehead is wet!' Then I told what I had done, and they were very angry with me: the priest scolded me well! But my brother opened his eyes, and he said, 'Polissena, what have you done to me, that you have brought me back to the world?' Afterwards he said, 'Did you see me when I made you a sign to pray for me?' But the end of it all was, that in a few days from that time he was well and about again!"

I asked Polissena if she had understood her brother's sign, and if she had been praying for him. She blushed a little, and dropped her voice, as she said, "When I was alone with him I knelt down by the bed, and said the 'Santo Verbo' three times over. That is a prayer that obtains a great many good answers; they say it hardly ever fails."

I asked her to teach me the Santo Verbo; and she then recited to me, with much devotion, a string of doggerel rhymes, alluding to several sacred events, but without a word of anything that could be called prayer, from beginning to end. "But you must say it *three times*, you know," she said, as she came to the end. I thought that I might have said it thirty without its doing me any good.

So I asked her if that was *all* she said, "because," said I, "you do not ask for anything with that prayer." She answered, "I say to the Lord, 'Do please give me what I need so much, *per amor mio!*' Of course He knows all about it, so there is no need of saying more than that."

About that time Polissena thought she must go home, where she was wanted to put some sticks to the beans; but as she turned around at the door to take leave of me, with her peculiar modest grace, I found that I had quite come round to the neighbours' opinion that she was "piuttosto bellina," myself.

I think, although I tried hard to give a faithful likeness, that the picture gives no idea of what is best in her face; her features are like what I have drawn, but her face, when she speaks, lights into great brilliancy. While drawing her, I learned several things more about her. To my surprise, I find that she knows how to read very well, though she has never been to school; this is the account which she gave me of her education:—

"When I was a little child I used to be a good deal in the house of some neighbours, who were quite rich people. The father wished very much that his daughter, who was a very pretty girl, and much older than I, should learn to read, and he paid a master to come to the house and teach her. But she would never attend to her lessons, and used to try her master's patience until he hardly knew what to do. The truth is, she was in love: and her lover (whom she afterwards married) was always coming in to talk with her, and so she did not care about the reading. The master used to say: 'What a pity you will not learn, when your poor father pays so much to have you taught!' But she would not mind what he said; and so, as he had nothing to do, he used to say to me, 'Little girl, don't *you* want to learn?' I was only too well pleased, and he taught me to read very well."

I asked her what books she had, and she said, "One or two books of prayers, and the *Via del Paradiso.*"

I do not think she needs that last book very much; it seems to me that she knows the "way to heaven" already, and is walking in it straighter than most of us do. Her faith is so great, and her conscience so clear, that she has no fear for this world or the next.

She says: "God has given us death, but He has given us heaven too!" After thinking a little, she added: "He wants us to deserve it; but then, there are so many to pray for us. You know up in heaven there are so many angels! And all the people who do no harm, and never speak evil of their neighbours, the angels pray for them. Besides, we can pray for ourselves, and ask God to give us what we want in the other world, just as we do when we want anything here, and He will be *sure* to give it to us! Up in heaven, they say, we shall have always music and singing; I suppose they will have all *good* songs, not like a great many that one hears about the country here; perhaps the music will sound something like the church bells: they say those are the Lord's voice!"

I asked her about her brother who married the incomprehensible young lady who does not like to work.

She said, "They are doing very well; my brother likes work well enough for both of them; he is in Sardegna now; he has not come home this summer, and he sends all his money to his wife at Pian degli Ontani."

(Really I think this may be called an unselfish attachment—to live all the year round in Sardegna, at the risk of Maremma fever, and never see the object of his affections, but content himself with the happiness of working to maintain her in idleness!)

I wanted to buy some potatoes of Polissena, but she refused to let me pay for them, saying that I had bestowed too many favours upon her, and that I must take them "per amor mio," as she always says. I told her that I could not remember having done anything for her; to which she replied with much solemnity, "But the Lord will remember."

When I pressed her for an explanation, I found that she alluded to my having paid her a moderate price for some plants, which I bought of her when we came here in July. "I bought a bag of meal," she said, "with that money; and we have enjoyed it so much!"

She told me that a lady, who passed the summer months near them, had wished to take her for a servant to sweep the house and draw the water. "I was sorry not to go with her," she said. "She was such a sweet, good lady! But when I thought of my mother, I knew that I could not leave her; and when my mother heard of it she said, 'If Polissena goes, we may as well *all* go.'"

I hope I have not tired you with all these little particulars, which do not seem to amount to anything; but you will understand I never know exactly what you may think of consequence and what not; and so I generally tell you everything, or at least everything which I care about myself. And I have come to care a good deal about Polissena, and I feel as if I always gain something when I am with her. Sometimes I think it is—you remember that our Lord spoke of certain people whom He would *make His abode with*—well, sometimes I think that perhaps she is one of those, and that He is always with her; she seems like it.

August 27th, 1886.—I wanted very much to write this morning, because Polissena passed the day with me yesterday, and told me all the story about the horse. She came in all the rain, dripping wet, but with sunshine enough in her face to illuminate a dozen rainy days, carrying the unfailing basket—potatoes this time, with flowers laid on the top, and chestnut leaves over all.

And after we had made her sit and dry herself a while by the kitchen fire, which she considered quite an unnecessary precaution, I brought her to my room, where we had a long and very interesting conversation. She turned her chair around two or three times at first, and seemed a little uncomfortable as she looked at the pictures on the wall. At last she said to me, "My poor father used to say that it was not proper to turn one's back on any picture of the Lord Jesus or the Madonna; but when they are all round the room, what can I do?"

I managed to set her conscience at rest on this important subject; and then I asked her about the horse who would not drink excepting at the fountain, and she gave me a long and minute horse-biography, of which I will not trouble you with more than a small part. His name was Lilli, and he was a strong, handsome chestnut horse that her father bought just before he died. "He brought us all up," she said; and then, seeing that I looked puzzled at the idea of a horse filling the position of nurse and governess, she explained herself: "He earned the living of all of us when we were children."

She went on to say: "It is true that he would never drink, excepting at the fountain. I could never understand that: who knows what sort of idea he had about it? Perhaps he thought the water in the fountain was cleaner, but I am sure it was not, for I always brought him nice fresh water into the stable. But when he was thirsty he used to call me to take him to the fountain. Sometimes he would call me up in the night, and then if I did not go at once he would call again, and I always knew what he wanted, and could not help going. Poor thing, he was so good, and had done so much for us; we all loved him so much! Besides, if I did not take him to the fountain when he wanted to go, he would not eat either, and then of course we could not expect him to work. He lived with us for more than twenty years, and he was so gentle that he never needed any guiding but my voice; he understood everything I said. Whenever any of us went into the stable he used to make a great many compliments; but more to me than any of the others, because when I went, I always took him a piece of bread or chestnut cake or polenta."

Afterwards I asked her a good many questions about herself and her life; and I was rather surprised, as she is so religious, to find that she does not seem to care much about going to church. She says:—

"I pray better in the forest, and for the most part, while I am at work. I have tried to fall into that habit, because, you know, poor people cannot afford to take a great deal of time for their prayers. With ladies and gentlemen, of course it is different; but I do not think the work makes the prayers any worse. In the forest I am quiet, and nothing disturbs my thoughts; while in church,—well, when I was a child it seems to me that things were different, and that people used to go to church with great devotion; but now, people go in fashionable dresses, and they

look about, and whisper, and sometimes they come and whisper to *me;* and then, how can I keep my mind fixed on what is going on?"

To Edwige, who is much troubled with fears of purgatory, she said: "I am never afraid. We must try to do as well as we can; and the Lord will not condemn us; you know what He said, 'Male non fare—paura non avere.'" Which common Italian proverb she fully believes to be of Divine origin.

But if I go on in this way I shall fill up all my letter with Polissena's sayings; so I will leave them, though they are almost all worth remembering. I suppose in everybody's religion one idea, or doctrine rather, takes the lead; in hers it is an overpowering sense of the goodness of the Almighty.

Do you know, Faustina, in the *Roadside Songs*,[1] is becoming quite a heroine among the Quakers; and it is really a help and comfort to me to know that some people feel as I do about the army and the conscription, which are eating the heart out of Italy. The Italians have put me down with lofty talk about "l'amor della patria," and will not understand that it is just because I *do* love Italy that I cannot bear to see it so burdened. These good Quakers want me to write something more about it, but I shall not, for I have not the talent sufficient; and if I had, nobody would mind anything I said. You know I do not believe in the world growing any better,—not until the Lord's kingdom comes.

I was interrupted by the arrival of some friends from Fiumalbo, who always come once a year to pass a day with us. One of them was Rosa Donati, called La Bianca, keeper of the shop where everything is sold in Fiumalbo, from books of devotion to confectionery (of which last she brought us a handsome specimen of her own making, a curious cake which nobody else knows how to make, composed of rice, sugar, and almonds). Her husband is the carpenter, a very poor, humble, hard-working old man, of whom she told us a story yesterday, which made me think that he had really a good deal more idea of "honour" than most of the gentlemen who talk about it, and fight about it.

He has lately, as we already knew, inherited a (for him) considerable property—12,000 francs—from a cousin. But what we did *not* know was, that the cousin made nearly all this money by buying the confiscated Church property for about a tenth of its value. And all this the old carpenter has returned to its original use as nearly as he can, by giving it to his parish priest to use for religious purposes while he lives, and leave to his successor when he dies. So there is a carpenter that I think St. Joseph need not be ashamed of!

To-day Polissena has been to see me again; and, though I did not mean to tell you anything about her in this letter (fearing that you must be tired of hearing about her), she has, in the course of a long conversation, told me some things that throw so much light on her history and character, that I cannot help writing them down now before I forget them.

She says that she had such a good grandmother, who died when she was a little girl, but she can still remember her perfectly. The old lady was very pious and charitable, and would always spare something from her

[1] [For her story and her conscript-lover, see pp. 179–183.]

poverty for whoever had need. One day, when she was alone in the house with Polissena (then a small child), some one knocked at the door; and she said, "That is a poor beggar: go, my child, and take him a piece of bread!"

But Polissena was unwilling.

"Grandmother, you are *always* sending me to the door with pieces of bread; and pretty soon there will be none left for us!"

"Oh, what a foolish little thing you are!" said the grandmother. "Do you not know that when we help the poor, what goes out at the door always comes back through the window? Nobody ever came to want in that way! But go now, and take the bread to the poor man, and then I will tell you how our Lord knocked at a rich man's door once Himself!"

I will not write out the grandmother's story, because it was a free version of the Madonna and the Rich Man,[1] with our Lord instead of His mother asking for help; but it made such an impression on Polissena, that she says, "The grandmother never had to speak *twice* to me after that to make me go to the door; indeed, I generally went without being told at all!"

Another little story that the old lady used to tell her children will make you smile if I tell it as Polissena told it, and yet it has a beautiful side to it, and brought the tears to her eyes, and made her voice tremble as she repeated it. "Once it happened that the Lord and St. Peter were walking out together, and they passed through a street in a certain town where some masons were at work on a house, and there was a young man hanging by a rope. You have seen builders tied with ropes in that way, have you not, doing some work on the front of the house? And all at once they heard him exclaim, 'Oh, it is our Lord and St. Peter!'

"And he tried to turn so as to have a good look at them; and I suppose the rope was not fastened very well: he fell, fell to the ground, and was killed before their eyes! St. Peter was very sad about that poor young man, and he walked on silently for some time, until they found themselves in a wild place, some way out of the city, where there was quite an ugly piece of road, cut like a terrace on the side of the mountain, with a ravine below it full of rocks, and a wood at the bottom, ... really a very dangerous place! A very old man was coming toward them; but as he drew near, his foot slipped, and he rolled down that terrible ravine, among the rocks, to the bottom.

"St. Peter supposed, of course, that he was dead; but after a few minutes they saw him climbing up again, and he was hardly hurt at all. And yet it was a much worse fall than the other. St. Peter's heart was still very heavy for the young builder, and he said:

"'Lord, why didst Thou save the old man, whose life is so nearly over, and not the young man, for whom life was just beginning?'

"And our Lord answered:

"'The young man's soul was mine, but the old man's soul is not mine yet!'

"At which answer St. Peter's eyes filled with tears; and that is the reason why, grandmother said, his eyes have tears in them now, once a year, when his festa comes."

[1] [For which, see *Roadside Songs;* above, pp. 104–107.]

"But, Polissena," I said, after listening to this story, "what do you mean about St. Peter's eyes filling with tears? Do you mean some image of him in a church, or the saint himself in heaven, who sheds tears on his festa?"

"I cannot remember!" she answered; then, after some reflection, "I should not wonder if it were in Rome! It may have been in Rome; it may have been in heaven; but I rather think it was in Rome, because, if it had been in heaven, it would have been difficult for any one to go there and see it, and then come back and tell about it!"

And I have a good deal more to write about the grandmother, but it is growing late, so I think I had better send you the rest in another letter.

I must end Polissena's account of her grandmother, which I left in the middle yesterday.

She went on to say:—

"My grandmother used to sleep with my sister and me—one on each side of her—and before we went to sleep she used to hear us say our prayers, and she would teach us what prayers she knew herself. Sometimes—you know what children are—we were sleepy, and did not want to finish our prayers; but she would say:

"'You had better go on, children; you will sleep so much the better, and have such a pleasant awakening in the morning!'

"Poor grandmother, she used to pray so much herself! If we awoke in the night, we would see her, by what light came in through the window, kneeling by an arm-chair that stood by the wall, with a picture of the Madonna hanging over it; I remember just how she looked, always in her nightdress.

"She was often cold at night; and we would call to her: 'Grandmother, come back to bed! You were cold just now: you told us so; do not stay there in your nightdress!' and she would answer:—

"'I am not cold now, children!'

"She lived to be very old—a lively, pretty old woman, always busy and active, working about the house, and keeping things tidy (for she was extremely neat in her ways), and she had hardly any illness before she died. Her name was Eulalia; and my mother named two children for her after she died, but neither of them lived long. I suppose we were not worthy to have another Eulalia in the family."

After I had listened to this account, I told Polissena that it must have been a great blessing to have such a good woman in the family; to which she replied quickly, and with a certain sort of jealousy that I have often noticed in her where her mother is concerned:—

"But my mother is so good, too! In all my life I cannot remember that I ever heard her speak sharply, neither have I ever seen her strike one of her children. And I must say that the children are good to her. My brothers are grown-up men now, but they are always perfectly obedient to her, as if they were little children."

So much, then, for the family that was brought up by the horse!

I thought you might like to hear these particulars, which, however, I did not mean to make so long; but now I do not mean to trouble you any

more about Polissena, excepting that, before I leave her finally, I think I ought to tell you that she has some very peculiar ideas about religion, which I am sure nobody ever taught her, for I never saw them in any religious book, whether Catholic or Protestant. She believes—says she is certain—that there is *no need* of sickness or trouble, and that they only come, in some way or other, from wrong-doing; that if people would trust in the Lord, and leave everything in His hands without fear, and be very careful to "obey Him in everything," as she expresses it, "there is no reason why everybody should not have *two heavens*, one here and the other there."

She added:—

"I always trust the Lord about everything myself; and that is why I am so fortunate! When I have no work to do, it never makes me anxious, for I *know* He will think of it; and the day never ends without somebody wanting me for something or other, and sending to hire me. People often wonder at my good fortune, but they could all have just the same if they would!"

There, I have told you enough now (though I will not promise not to have some more to tell you the next time Polissena comes).[1]

[1] [See below, pp. 288, 299.]

II

"PENSATEVI VOI!"[1]

I WANT now to tell you a story that I think will please you; and though not long, it will take me some time to put together all the fragments that I have been able to gather up from Signor Bortolo, and from the present tavern-keeper of Rivalta, Catina's son. I should not have said anything about it if it had not been for what you once wrote—which made a great impression upon me at the time—about the possibility of a tavern being just as good as a church;[2] and so I thought you would like to hear about the only case I ever heard of in which it really was so.

This good Catina—her maiden name was Benetti—came from Asiago, a place beloved alike of geologists and antiquarians,[3] and the old seat of government of the Sette Comuni, which kept a sort of half independence for I should be afraid to say how many centuries under the Venetian republic. One of these days, if you care to hear about the strangest and most out-of-the-world corner of the Veneto, I will write you an account of Asiago,[4] where we once stayed for some time. It is enough to say just now that it is a place very remarkable for the piety, honesty, and intelligence of its people.*

Whenever in the Veneto one hears of a parish priest who is doing an extraordinary amount of good, one is extremely likely to hear in the next breath, "He came from Asiago! as I have often observed."

Catina was left an orphan at twelve years old, and went to live with an aunt, whose trade it was to weave and sell linen; and she herself learnt to weave, and did it, as she always did everything, well. Signor Bortolo, who knew her as a middle-aged woman, says that she was very handsome, tall, light in her movements, and very strong: a quite poor photograph which I have of her, taken in extreme old age, and when she was much broken, shows that she had fine regular features, and, apparently, blue eyes and a fair colour.

Francesco Moro, of Rivalta, was a raftsman of the Brenta, whose business was to bring loads of wood from the mountains, and sell them in Bassano; and the business carried him every now and then to Asiago.

* The reader must please observe that in the title of this book, "Apennine" stands broadly for "hill country of Italy."

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[1] [For the title, see below, p. 273.]

[2] [See *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 83 (Vol. XXIX. p. 272), and the other places there noted.]

[3] [A notice of the rocks will be found in Murchison's paper "On the Structure of the Alps," in the *Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society*, vol. v., 1849, p. 224.]

[4] [For some such account, see below, pp. 294–296.]

One day he had some money in his pocket, and wanted to buy a piece of linen. Somebody directed him to Catina. She had none on hand, but promised to weave it before his next visit. On his return he found that she had kept her promise; he was pleased with the linen, more pleased with the weaver, and, in his son's words, "He began then to look upon her with eyes of love."

They did not waste much time in courtship. He married her without a soldo in her pocket, and took her home to Rivalta, to the house where his father, mother, brother, and brother's wife were all living together. From that day to the end of his life, Francesco Moro seems to have been completely devoted to his wife, and altogether dependent upon her. She was not very happy with his family; she was used to poverty, but not to roughness, and they were, I fear, rather a rough, hard set of people. As soon as he went away with his raft they set her to bringing loads of wood down from the mountain on her shoulders, as they were in the habit of doing themselves. She had not been used to this sort of work, and it was too hard for her, but they insisted. On the day when her husband was to return they had given her a very heavy load to carry. Her son says:—

She raised it with great difficulty to her shoulder, and it fell off. Then she tried the other shoulder, and it fell again. She tried over and over again in every way she could think of, but she could not carry it, and at last she said, "I will do this no more!" And she left her bundle of wood and came home without it.

Later in the day, when she saw her husband coming up the bank from the river, she went to meet him, and told him her story, and she said,

"Francesco, help me! If I do this work any longer I shall die!"

He thought a little and then said,

"I *will* help you, but you must do as I say. I will not go home just yet; but you go, and when the supper is ready do not sit down to eat with the others, and do not call me. After supper, prepare something in a tegame * by itself, and call me in, and we will eat together."

Catina did as she was told, and she and her husband ate together at a table apart after the others had done. The old man took no notice of them until they had finished, then he said,

"I see what you have done, and I know what you mean by it. This is the last meal that you will ever eat in my house. You may sleep here to-night, but in the morning go!"

I have told all this in the words of the son, but now it is easier for me to go on by myself. In the morning the young people went out into the world alone together, without money or provision of any kind; only Catina had a little bundle of clothes that she brought from Asiago. A kind neighbour, to whom they told their story, gave them a breakfast of potatoes, after which they set about making the best of their circumstances, pretty much as a pair of squirrels might have done.

Francesco chose a bit of waste and useless ground, close to the river, to which no one was likely to dispute his right, and there he built with his own hands a shed of rough boards, which for many years was their

* "Tegame," an earthen pan.

only shelter summer and winter. There their eleven children were born, and there nearly all the events which I have still remaining to tell you took place. Catina sold most of her clothes, and bought—besides one or two objects of first necessity for the house—two bottles of brandy and a little fruit, with which she opened a shop (*in the shed, of course!*)* The raftsmen and barocciai would not think they could live, and no one else would expect them to live, without a glass of brandy now and then, especially in cold weather. Catina did nothing contrary to her conscience, nor to the conscience of those about her. On the contrary, she was fully persuaded that whatever she did was especially given her to do by the Almighty; so that, in the words of Signor Bortolo, "She never thought *she* did anything; she thought that God did it all by her means." Neither was she ever for a moment troubled by their necessities and difficulties.

Her son says of her, that the placidity of her spirit was never disturbed, nor her temper ruffled, by any contrariety; that her face was always smiling and contented. Whenever she undertook any new scheme (and she did undertake a great many, for her poor family) and it did not prosper, she used to say,

"Oh Signore Dio! quest' affare va male. Pensatevi voi!" That is, "O Lord God! this affair goes badly. See to it Thyself!"

After which she would dismiss the affair from her mind. Her son said: "I have heard her say those words a hundred times; and, whatever the affair was, it *always went well afterwards.*"

Her ambition was to sell wine, and how she accomplished it shows just what an energetic woman she was. She had a neighbour, a woman, who owned a little land, and had lately been mowing; this neighbour once told her that she should like to sell her hay. On the next market day, without saying a word to any one, Catina rose early, went to her friend's hay mow, and took a wisp, only a wisp, of hay; with which she set off before sunrise, for Bassano, twelve miles away,† where she had never been. There she stationed herself among the tents and benches in the Piazza, under the old clock-tower, and waited her time.

She did not know a soul in the place, (*which was much more of a great world to her than Paris can ever possibly have been to you;*) but she was not at all anxious, and did not trouble herself to speak to any one. It was God's business, not hers, to provide for the husband who had sacrificed everything for her, and for the babes in the shed by the Brenta. She thought that He had sent her down to Bassano to sell hay that morning; and of course, all in good time, He would send somebody to buy it. Pretty soon, Count Niccolo Caffo, one of the principal men of Bassano, strayed out through the market, and his attention was attracted by the silent, stately woman, standing still like a statue, while the others were shouting and gesticulating to attract attention and invite customers. He went up to her, and asked what she wanted. She answered that she had come from the country to sell hay, bringing a specimen with her. At this he told her that he thought they might make a bargain, as he just then wanted some hay

* Italics mine, and will be mine in future, Francesca never using them.

† And down hill, into the wider world. Asiago is at the head of a sequestered valley.

for his horses. And he invited her into his house near by, that they might come to an agreement regarding the price, etc. When there, she told him that her great wish was to sell the hay for a barrel of wine; at which he at first laughed, the wine (of which he had a good store, made on his own estate,) being worth much more than the hay. But Catina had something about her, which I, having never seen her, cannot attempt to describe, (but which, as you know well, some people *do* have,) which generally made everybody do exactly what she said. And when Count Caffo had finished laughing, the next thing he did was to promise that he would on the following day send the barrel of wine to Rivalta, and take away the hay. Catina walked home, quite contented, and immediately went to the house of her neighbour who owned the hay.

"I have sold your hay," she said, "for a barrel of wine; and now I want you to wait a little for your money. Let me keep the wine, and sell it in my shop; and when it is sold, I will pay you all."

To this her friend readily consented; Catina sold her wine, paid for it, and had a fair profit left; and better than that, she had made a good friend in Count Caffo, whose kindness from that day forth never failed her. He presented her to his friend, Signor Ambrogio Zanchetta, the father of Signor Bortolo, and brother of our dear "Mother of the Orphans;" * a man whose memory is still held in great reverence in Bassano. Signor Ambrogio immediately lent her another barrel of wine, and a sack of Indian corn, to be paid for after she had sold them. And it soon became well known that everybody could trust Catina; her debts were always paid when due, and no one ever lost by her. Her husband meanwhile kept on with his raft and his loads of wood; but such was his confidence in her, that he always left whatever money he earned in her hands, reserving only, as his son said, "a few coppers to give to the poor, when he went to church." (By the way, do you not think that almost any man in his position would have thought that *he* was one of the poor himself, and rather have expected people to give to *him*?)

After a while the neighbours began to tell old Moro, the father, that it was a shame in him never to help his son Francesco; and finally the old man was shamed into giving him a very small bit of land, consisting of a steep bank, sloping *down* from a terraced mountain road. Catina, immediately on coming into possession of this handsome and unexpected fortune, proposed to her husband that they should build a tavern! And they really did it! Without spending money, or hiring workmen, husband, wife, and larger children all worked together. None of them knew anything about building, but somehow they *did* build it, and not so badly, either!

Catina *made the mortar, carried stones, and directed everything.* When the building was finished, it consisted of three rooms, one above the other; of which the highest only, where the shop was kept, was on a level with the road, and the other two were built into, (or hollowed out of,) the bank.

And now I come to what I particularly wanted to tell you,—the very

* I hope to give her story in next number.[1]

[1] [See pp. 278 *seq.*]

peculiar way in which Catina carried on a tavern, and kept shop. First of all, I ought to say that it was a very successful way. She died quite rich, according to her ideas, and her son is now a very prosperous tavern-keeper, who cannot speak of his mother without his voice trembling, and his eyes filling with tears. But it *was* a peculiar way. The first thing she did was, to make every Saturday a great kettle of soup, and give it all to the poor. Her children remonstrated,—"Mother, we have not bread enough to eat; and you give soup to the poor!" She answered, "God gives everything to us, and we can give nothing to Him! Only He has said to us, that what we give to the poor, we give to Him; let me give back to Him a little of what is His own!"

Still the children would not be contented; and they teased her so, for what they considered her extravagance, that, for once in her life, she yielded, and on the next Saturday there was no more soup for the poor. On the afternoon of the same day, a contadino came to the shop, to settle some affair with Catina; and while he was talking with her, his donkey, which he had left outside with the cart, put his head in at the shop window, and somehow managed to upset a large basket of eggs, there exposed for sale. Catina, on seeing what had happened (a considerable misfortune for her), said:

"See, children; you would not let me make the soup for the poor, and now this misfortune has happened! The price of those eggs would have paid for twenty kettles of soup!"

And from that day forth the children let her give away what she liked in peace; and the poor never wanted again for their Saturday's dinner.

When she went to Bassano, which she always did, I believe, on market day, the first thing she did was to go to church, and give the priest three *lire Venete,* to say a mass for the souls in purgatory. To this mass she listened with great devotion; then went about her affairs, with the full assurance that the blessing of Heaven went with her. As I have said, her temper was of the sweetest and most tranquil; but there were two things which, with all her power of endurance, she could never bear,—profanity, or evil speaking. If any man, talking with others in her little shop, so far forgot himself as to use the name of the Almighty without due reverence, or tell any story injurious to the character of a neighbour, Catina, in unspeakable distress and agitation, would take him by the jacket and put him out of the door, saying:

"Not here! For the love of God, not here!"

(All this, you understand, at the risk of losing her customers; but in Catina's manner of doing business, the affairs of the other world were always first, and those of this world second.)

And having noticed that, in other *osterie,* as the men sat around the fire after eating and drinking, their conversation was seldom free from profane language and scandalous stories, she, in building *her* little tavern, would have no seats in the chimney; saying that *her fire was for cooking,* and not for people to sit and gossip over. Her son and Signor Bortolo both agreed in telling me that prayer was such a constant habit with her, that there was hardly any time when she was not praying. Often when people came into her shop to buy, they found her so absorbed in prayer

that she did not even see them.* When they had aroused her attention, and she was weighing out the bread, or fruit, or whatever they wanted, she talked to them always of God.

Signor Bortolo says of her: "She mixed God in everything: she could not make a bargain for a bag of Indian corn without mixing Him in it!"

She was often at his house, when he was a child (for the Caffo and Zanchetta families continued until the end of her life her best friends); and as she entered the cortile where he was generally playing with his brother and sisters, she never saluted them in any usual fashion, but always with the words,

"Keep close to God, children; He does everything!"

The thought that He was always with her, made her never afraid to undertake anything of which she saw the need, however difficult. There was no church in her time at Rivalta, and one seemed to be much wanted. She proposed to the few people of the village that they should build one; and such was her influence over them, that they immediately set about it, she working among them, as she had done at the building of her tavern, and all her family, large and small, helping.

When the church was finished, the good Signor Ambrogio presented an altar-cloth and two candlesticks. *And this church is at present maintained by the Rivalta people, but principally by Catina's son, who, in piety, seems to follow his mother very closely.* Catina lived to be very old; nobody ever knew exactly *how* old. During the last years of her life she became infirm and quite deaf; but (her son said) she looked and seemed perfectly happy, "praying always, and knitting always; sitting until the end in the corner of the shop where she had sat ever since her youth, with a very bright, sweet look in her face!"

She died in 1872, her husband having passed away several years before.

There is my story; not just what it might have been if I had known Catina myself, but still, I think you will say, worth the time it will take you to read it.

Yes, Francesca, that is all very well; but you don't count how many times some of us may want to read it over again; and then to think over it; and then to read the history, if we can find it anywhere, of the Seven Commonwealths under the rule of Asiago,[1]—of which I

* The reader will please observe that whatever the truth of the Bible may be, he may learn from these stories the accurate meaning of it. These two first given explain what St. Paul (or whoever else wrote them) *meant* by the verses, "Rejoice evermore," "Pray without ceasing," "In *everything* give thanks; for this is the will of God, in Christ Jesus, concerning you."[2]

[1] [For a reference by Miss Alexander to a book on the Sette Comuni, see below, p. 295. A pleasant account of Asiago and of a walk across the Comuni may be found in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of July 20 and 30, 1887.]

[2] [Thessalonians v. 16, 17, 18.]

am sure we shall be grateful for whatever you will take patience to tell us. But chiefly, for myself, I want to know of the Eleven who built the Tabernacle, what has become of the Ten little Franks and Catinas who were thus brought up, at home,—as it is more and more my notion that children should always be, and none of them sent to schools or lycées, other than their parents can provide. But I say nothing till Francesca tells us how the people of Asiago remained so pious, intelligent, and honest; and what has become of the Ten little Cats and their tribes.

Brantwood,
February 11th, 1887.

III

THE MOTHER OF THE ORPHANS

I THINK we are beginning, Francesca and I, perhaps a little too grandly with our Polissenas, and Catinas, and Superioras, all at once. Here are two letters just come, one from Francesca herself, one from her mother, which describe another order of folk of the Apennine,—they also very sweet, and dear, and wonderful; and to be kept reverent record of, among the servants of heaven. So we will let the story of the Superiora wait a little, and have some talk of these; only first, here is what Francesca says in answer to the envoi of "Pensatevi" and its questions:—

"But now I must thank you for the beautiful words that you have written at the end of 'Pensatevi voi!' especially for what you said about schools. I have a perfect horror, myself, of all 'institutions' which separate children from their families; and I, too, have known young people who have learnt infidelity, and much else that is bad, in those places. But one lesson they never fail to learn, whatever else is wanting,—that they can do very well without papa and mamma; and this lesson, once learnt, is never again forgotten, as papa and mamma, after they grow old, usually find out. And I do think that parents must be very bad indeed, not to be better, for their children, than any one else.

"Then I wonder what most people mean by *education*. Awhile ago, I heard somebody lamenting sadly about a dear little girl whom I know, that her education was interrupted by her care of a sick mother! The poor mother wrote me, about the same time, that she could never be thankful enough for the blessing that she had in her little daughter, *who never forgot anything that could be a comfort to her*. I wonder if she would have been taught that, or anything else as good, in a boarding-school?

"But how my pen is running away with me to-day! Worse than ever before, I think. Next week I will send you a letter all about Asiago and the Sette Comuni:[1] I do not write it to-day, because I want a little time to think up my recollections. Meanwhile, your wish to know about the 'little cats, and their tribes,' obliges me to tell you what I fear it will make you sad to hear,—that nearly all Catina's children died young, though not in infancy. People say, 'They were taken away early, in mercy to their good mother, because the world is so wicked now! Who knows, if

[1] [See below, pp. 294–296.]

they had lived, if they could have resisted.' Of her six sons, only one is left; and he, a gray-haired man, the good tavern-keeper of Rivalta. He told me that he had three sisters living, two married, and one single; but I have never seen any of them.

"I wonder at your little girls not caring for botany,* which I have always found delightful, though I have never had much time to study it: and I wonder especially that, among the cruciferæ flowers, not one of them thought of wall-flowers, my own favourite!

"Now, I want to tell you that I feel so much obliged to you for putting it into my head to draw these pictures of Saints!† It is the pleasantest work that ever I did, and keeps me always in good company; and I have many beautiful stories that no one now seems to know anything about. Paolina[1] comes to me once a week, and I have chosen her as a model for a lady who especially practised the virtue of patience, because I think she looks like the character. I asked her the other day if she had ever, in her life, been out of temper, and she had to think a great while before she could remember, but finally was rather of opinion that she had been, some time or other."

(Now we come to the other orders of Christ's Folk.)

"Do you know, your interest in my bee,[2] and in Marietta's swallows, makes me want to tell you about some other pretty creatures that I have been fond of. I have had very few pets in my life, if that means animals of my own to take care of; but I have had a good many four-footed friends; and I am going to leave now several things that I wanted very much to write, for the sake of telling you about a cow that I used to know a great many years ago, when we first began to go to l'Abetone. Not that there is much to tell, only she was rather a remarkable character, and she and I were greatly attached to each other. She was one of five, that used to go about the country attended by a poor girl, generally considered to be under-witted. Marina was the girl's name,‡ and she was certainly

* In answer to a word in my last letter about my Saturday class, of which I will give some account in next number.[3] Their attention was, at the time, restricted to cress and cabbage, and not permitted to wander towards wild and useless things like wall-flowers!

† In sequel to *Roadside Songs*, and illustrating more authentic traditions.[4]

‡ In order to prepare for general Index, I think it will be best henceforward to put a terminal note to each part of "Folk," with the names of the people in it.[5] Here are our old friend Paolina, and a Marietta and Marina, all worth our memory, in two pages. So I shall introduce at once the proposed registry, which must be also a dictionary: for I suppose Paolina means little Paula, and Marietta little Mary; but Marina, sea-maid (?)—as Marino Faliero.[6]

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[1] [For whom see *Roadside Songs*, above, pp. 110–115.]

[2] [The story of the bee is given later, p. 289.]

[3] [See now, below, pp. 286, 287.]

[4] [For one of these drawings of Santa Rosa, see below, p. 316.]

[5] [See now the complete Index, below, p. 335. Ruskin did not, however, carry out his idea of making the index "a dictionary."]

[6] [For Byron's names in this connexion, see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 92 and *n.* (Vol. XXXIV.).]

rather silly, and not just like other people; but she was affectionate, and usually gentle, though she would fly into a terrible passion if any one teased the cows; and she had a poetical streak in her nature, that made me like to talk to her. She loved those cows with an absolutely passionate affection. I remember her saying to me once, 'Poor cows! they are a great deal better than we are. I am sure that God must love them more than He does us, because they never do any harm, nor speak evil of their neighbours!' She treated them always with the most deferential politeness, and had given them very poetical names.[1] They were, Bella Rosa, Stella, Damigella, Argentina, and Galantina. And, like most animals so treated, they had become almost human in intelligence and power of affection. Cows have their sympathies, like the rest of us, and for some reason best known to herself, Argentina saw fit to attach herself to me. She was a very beautiful young creature, not quite full grown, with a quiet and stately grace about her that would have done credit to any lady. She was snow white; only the tips of her horns, the tassel at the end of her tail, her hoofs, and her heavy fringes of eyelashes, were black. And,—I am afraid you will find it hard to believe what I am going to say, but Mammina remembers it as well as I do,—when I was drawing in the field, as I often did in those days, Argentina would come behind me, bend her beautiful head until it rested on my shoulder, and watch, with much apparent interest, the progress of my work. Mammina was frightened at first to see those long horns so near my eyes; but the gentle creature was always careful not to hurt any one. And Mammina has always believed that she really cared for what I was doing, and liked to see the picture grow under my hand. I suppose it was only the wish to share in whatever I was doing, that one often sees in animals toward those whom they love.

"But I did not think this would have been so long a story; you must excuse it. And now I must end, for it is growing late. Mammina wrote you a letter yesterday, which, I am sorry to say, I forgot to post, so now I must send them both at once. Good-bye. I wish I had more time and more paper. With love as ever.

"Florence, *March 10th*, 1887."

(Here follows the ratification by Mammina in quite good time.)

"The beautiful milk-white cow, when she stood behind F. and rested her chin on her shoulder, certainly had every appearance of watching the landscape, and the gradual creation of it on the paper. I, also, had a friend among them, but mine was a cream colour, finished with black. Their mistress was half-poetess and half-underwitted; she was the woman who, when her baby died, said she meant to have given it to Francesca when it was two years old. We used to buy a great dish of salt, and go to meet the cows as they were going home at sundown, and give it to them. They were so fond of it. One evening the cream-coloured one—

[1] [The English reader will recall in this connexion the piece in Clough's "Idyllic Sketches" entitled *Ite Domum Saturæ, Venit Hesperus*, with its refrain to the cows, "Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie."]

her name was Bella Rosa—left the others, and walked home with us. She was a splendid creature in her way, with all the beauty of young wild life, and grown in mountain air. We passed through the fir-trees, and came to the fountain. Mr. Alexander had amused himself, helped by all the boys in Abetone, in making a wall of earth, covered with turf full of flowers, where the water ran from the brim of the basin; so it had made a transparent little lake, a few inches deep. Into this Bella Rosa walked, and after standing a moment, dropped her head till it just touched the water, drinking it so gently that it was not disturbed; she seemed rather breathing than drinking; and all the time she watched us with her great wild soft eyes. It was just sundown; it had been raining, and had cleared; the sky was pale transparent blue, cloudless, but the mists were drifting down the ravines, rose colour, white, and grey, fire colour prevailing.

"We had a tame canary that appeared also to like to see F. draw. Mr. A. found it at Bellosguardo; it had dropped into the road from a nest above a high wall; he brought it home, and we brought it up. It was summer time, the windows were all open, but it always kept in or about the house, and made itself entirely one of the family. It came to the table and breakfasted with us; it went with us when we walked out, flying from tree to tree, so as to keep near us; at night it roosted on the bar of the bed; it had no name but Birdie, but always answered when I called him, even when he was out of sight. One day I saw him on a fir-tree, and a cat creeping about it; I went to it and called him, and he flew down to my hand. He used to sit on the handle of F.'s pen and see her draw, and when she threw him off, he would make a circle round the room, and alight again on the pen-handle. How much he comprehended, we could never fancy, but all creatures have a wonderful sympathy with human beings.

"Do you know you are decidedly gaining health and strength? I cannot remember when the winter has dealt with you so kindly. Take good care of yourself, the greatest care, is the serious charge of

"La Tua Mammina.

"Florence, *March 16th*, 1887."

I must yet find room, before we come to the Superiora, for the story of Lilla with the blue eyes, with its incidental description of the King of Italy, better than any that got into the papers.

"But I wish that you could have seen how many people have come to me with sad faces, and gone away with happy ones in these last few weeks! One morning, when I went upstairs, I found waiting outside my door a girl whom I used to know, years ago, on a farm at Bellosguardo, as a pretty, barefoot baby, just large enough to toddle along by my side, and help me pick flowers, when I went to walk with her little black-eyed cousin, Frederico, just the same size. Lilla had blue eyes of extraordinary size and colour, with black, curling lashes; so that we have always spoken of her, ever since, as the baby with the blue eyes. And poor Frederico—he never grew to be anything but a baby! He was taken away suddenly,

one April day, before the flowers had faded that he had gathered that morning, 'to give to the Signorina,' as he said. And Lilla grew up to a woman, and lost her parents, and made what was called a prosperous marriage, with a Florentine shopkeeper, who fell in love with her blue eyes. And then he was unfortunate in business, and they became poor, and poorer still, until at last, there she was waiting at my door, with a handful of flowers and a baby. So I asked them in; and when they had sat down, I saw that Lilla was in trouble, and that she was afraid to tell me what it was. She could only tremble and hold down her head. So I began to question her, and told her not to be frightened, but to tell me just what was the matter. Still she could not speak, and I said, 'But I know that you are in trouble; I see by your eyes that you have shed many tears.' 'Yes,' she answered, 'I cried all last night.' 'Then tell me what the matter is!' and at last it all came out with a sob: 'We cannot pay the rent! The landlord is going to turn us out!' I was a good deal relieved to find out that this was all, and told her not to worry any more about that, but to tell me how much they were owing. But this she would not do, saying that the debt was *too large*, and that all she wished was that I would give her a little help for the present. However, I pressed her, and at last, dropping her face very low, and twisting her fingers very hard, she said, under her breath, '*Twenty francs.*' 'Now, Lilla,' said I, 'I do not think you are telling me the truth; the debt is more than twenty francs; tell me just what it is.' And, raising her eyes to my face with a sort of desperation she said, 'Well then, *twenty-five!*' But I do not believe there was a lighter heart in Florence that day than Lilla's (unless it was mine), when she went away with the money in her pocket.

"But it is rather hard to keep one's patience with the doings of the municipality just now, pulling down old houses before new ones are built, and making everybody generally uncomfortable. I have to think very often about that text that forbids our speaking evil of the rulers of our people; only I should like to know who they are; there never seems to be exactly anybody responsible. I am sure I like the King and Queen,—every one does; but it is hardly fair to call them rulers, when they cannot have so much their own way as other people. Sometimes the King will insist on having his a little, about his own affairs; he did last year, when the cholera was about, and everybody tried to make him stay out of danger.[1] I saw a lady a little while ago, married to a Piedmontese, who was at Busca, just where the cholera was worst, last summer, when the King went there, and she gave me an interesting account of it all. She said every one was in a panic, and afraid to go near the sick people; but the King took hold as if he had been an hospital nurse, going always where the danger was greatest, sitting by the beds of the sick, administering their medicines, rubbing them with spirit when the chill came, giving food, advice, or money as they were wanted, sometimes sympathising, sometimes laughing and jesting, to keep up their hearts, until others came forward to help, just for shame. And in the evening,

[1] [Of King Humbert's visitations to the cholera-stricken districts, many stories have been told. Among them is his saying, when he abandoned an arrangement to go to a race-meeting, "At Pordenone they rejoice; at Naples they die; I go to Naples."]

when he went to rest tired out, and his servants came about him to change his clothes and 'fumigate' him, he used to smile at their anxieties, and then raise his eyes to heaven, as if to say, 'There is where my safety comes from!' Of course all this did not suit every one, and there was some talk of passing a law to prevent 'sovereigns' from risking their lives; but Umberto said if they did he should be the first to break it, and as every one knew that he would keep his word, there was no more said about it.

"Mammina has just been reading your *Unto this Last*, and said so much to me about it that I *stole* a few minutes for it this morning (and was sorry I could not steal more). She and I were both much impressed by what you said, that masters should treat their workmen as they would be willing to have their own children treated if they were in the same place.[1] Do you know, it is *exactly* what I have heard her say, ever since I was a little child,—not about workmen (of whom she never had any experience), but *servants*. And neither she nor I ever heard such a word from any one else, and people have generally looked upon her ideas as very visionary; but she has always acted upon them, and nobody ever had such devoted servants. So if you want to know the practical working of your doctrine, I will tell you what Edwige said, after twenty years' service in our house. Some girls in my room were talking about an acquaintance who had just inherited a great fortune, and one of them said to Edwige, jestingly, 'If any one should leave you so much money, what would you do with it?' And she answered, without a moment's hesitation, 'I would keep on doing the work here, just the same, only then *I would not be paid for it.*'

"In one thing, Mammina says, perhaps you may think that she goes too far.* She thinks that servants should be paid enough to enable them to lay by a provision for their old age, without being dependent on the charity even of their employers; and she thinks, if people cannot afford to do this, they should keep fewer servants, or live in more humble style in other respects.

"Florence, *March* 16*th*, 1885."

After this lovely picture of the King of Italy, how well comes this following, of one of her truest nobles!

. . . . . .

[Here followed the account of "The Mother of the Orphans," reprinted from *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 96: see now Vol. XXIX. pp. 519–527, where three footnotes added in *Christ's Folk* are given. Francesca, after describing the orphanage at Bassano (founded by Don Giorgio Pisani), and noticing Annetta, the faithful servant, and the Lady Superior's dead sister, Paola ("who lived always so very near to heaven"), says that the institution is a happy place, and that it is the Superiora "who has made it so."]

* Mammina *has* a way sometimes of going too far, certainly! But not in this instance.

[1] [See *Unto this Last*, § 24 (Vol. XVII. p. 41).]

Pardon me, dear Francesca. She,—yes, and Annetta, and Don Giorgio, and the dead Paola, yet living "near to heaven," but with them; and the obedient souls and joyful hearts of every orphan child, recognizing the Mother given her again by God. These, and the Catholic traditions of Venice; and the glory and the beauty of Lombard Italy, in her land and her people,—in the blue mountains of Bassano, and the blonde beauty with a complexion like a sweetbriar rose, and eyes as peaceful as an infant's. Think you, Francesca, you could institute such an orphanage as this between Edmonton and Ware?

But I must say one more very definite word on the question of servants, touched so timidly by Mammina. She has never read rightly either her Carlyle, or me,[1] or—to so earnest a pilgrim mother I say it with reverent awe—her Bible. What does she imagine to be the meaning of the beautiful verses 13–17 of Deut. xv., "When thou sendest him (thy servant) out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty. Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy wine-press: of that wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee shalt thou give unto him. And if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee, because he loveth thee and thine house; then thou shalt take an awl, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever."

Of which the eternal import is, that a good servant is no more to be turned out in his old age than a good dog is. And either in a servant or a dog, the law of their goodness is that they love their master, and serve him for love, not for bones; which is indeed the manner of every right-hearted and nobly-minded service that ever was, or is, or can be, to the world's end,—or the end of any number of worlds that are yet to be made, according to existing laws of rock, flesh, and soul.

[1] [For Ruskin's views on servants, see Vol. XVII. pp. 518–525. For the reference to Carlyle, see his essay on "The Nigger Question" (*Miscellanies*, vol. vii.).]

IV

THE NUN'S SCHOOL IN FLORENCE

I

THE pretty stories in Francesca's latest letters come so fast, and the King's visits to Tuscany and the rebuilding of the Cathedral façade have so stirred the spirit of the people to all that she most delights in telling, that I know not how to arrange, nor where to end this number. But as in the last part there was question of what it is chiefly now vital for us to learn in England,—the right methods of schooling, or of doing without it, for the children of our own heathery Alps and grassy Apennines,—I will not let myself be drawn away from that matter; which has, indeed, been my own chief subject of thought and watching for all the years I have lived at Coniston.

We have one little school on our own side of the lake, quite perfect in its kind; a dame-school, in the dame's—Miss Yewdale's—cottage, with no schoolroom but her own comfortable kitchen, and the garden outside, into which the children can run when they are tired;—she, I think, never is. Beyond the garden, which is always bright with the first flowers of every month in the year in which flowers are born, is a bit of mossy and rocky field, falling steeply to the bed of a brook; beside which the rough path to the school-cottage winds up from the terrace road that leads to High Cross, the highest point of the hills between Coniston and Hawkshead.

And here the children learn—all that the most of them need ever know—to behave quietly, to be kind to each other, to read plain English words; to count, up to all they are ever likely to want of numbering; to sew, knit,

and fit their dress in a lasting and homely manner. But when from this wayside academy they are promoted into the Government school in the village of Coniston itself, they have to learn whatever will enable them to take office with business men in towns; and sundry things besides—in grammar, and modern physical science, which enable them for *nothing;* while of the natural history of their own country, and of any simple arts practicable by peasant hands, they remain wholly ignorant.

Four years ago I tried to simplify and bring to more local accuracy their astronomical knowledge, by building a celestial globe in their playground, large enough for two or three of them, according to size, to get inside of; which, turning on its pole, might be set always to the night of the month; and the chief stars, being represented by pierced larger or smaller holes, might be visible always by daylight, and on quiet evenings, by external lamplight, be compared in their groups with the actual stars. This was done for me in all contrivance of mechanism with perfect success by Mr. Gershom Collingwood;[1] but he got too much interested in the constellations himself ever to simplify their figures enough for distinctness to children; and we are both of us disheartened now, by the doubt whether the children of the immediate future will ever care to see the stars at all.

But this last spring, being out of conceit with my plans for endless books, I thought to write a dame-school one, on the wild flowers and useful vegetables of our own district, of which the text might be composed for me mostly by the children themselves. So with my own little farm-girl, the "Jane Anne" of *Fors* 94, p. 243,[2] I gave leave to six others, whose parents could give them plots of garden for their own, to come to Brantwood for their Saturday half-holiday; and so classed them by their seven ages to gather what they could find of wild flowers, choose what they

[1] ["The inclement weather of Coniston, and the natural roughness of children, soon wrecked the new toy" (W. G. Collingwood, *Life and Work of John Ruskin*, 1900, p. 372).]

[2] [The reference is to the original edition; see now Vol. XXIX. p. 487.]

liked best in the kitchen garden; and learn, with help of the best picture-books in Brantwood library, anything they cared to know of them. But I found that they cared to know less than I expected; and though during the half-hour's lecture chiefly telling them how to find out things for themselves, they were always delighted to do anything they thought might be useful to *me*, I found the botanical plates had little attraction when I left the room.

But one thing I proved with success, that the Latin roots of floral names might be learned with perfect ease, forming a foundation for the good understanding of all other English words related to them: only observe, the first law of learning Latin, for children of any rank, is that they should know the melody of it, read with the full Italian vowels. I hear, with more than amazement, of disputes still in our Universities about Latin pronunciation:—of course the scholars of Italy must give final verdict; but of all languages Latin is exactly the one in which sound has largest part of the power; and until it is sung, or spoken, Latin is only half understood. More things than this I should have proved, but Saturday half-holidays were not quite enough to do all I wanted. I must go on to Francesca's account of Catholic schooling for poorer children:—

"I began this letter yesterday, and was interrupted by the arrival of my sitter, a pretty and pleasant Dominican nun, who comes to me as a great favour, that I may study her dress for Santa Caterina. She belongs to a little sisterhood here, devoted to the care of the sick, and the teaching of poor children; and she herself teaches a school of fifty little girls in the old Ghetto—the poorest of the poor. She and one other sister teach them, first of all, their prayers; and then, reading, writing, sewing, and knitting; and they also make soup for their dinner. The children are expected to bring bread for themselves, but often some of them are so poor that they come without, and then the sisters buy it for them, if they can afford it. Some day I am going to see the school, and then I will tell you about it; meanwhile, I wish you could see my Monaca! She is the gayest, lightest-hearted creature in the world, and, for a middle-aged woman, the fullest of *play* that I ever saw, (though with plenty of good sense and real piety behind it)—ready to laugh at everything or nothing; and with a confirmed belief that her life of teaching, cooking, and sewing

is the most delightful and exhilarating possible. How she does love the children! How pleased she is to tell anything good about them! She says they love *her*, too, (which I think likely; I know *I* did, before she had been with me for half an hour!). 'When I was ill the other day, they all grew quiet and sober, and did not want to play in the recess; and if they see me going for water to make the soup, two or three of them always run after me and want to carry my pitcher.' I call her *pretty;* and, indeed, at first sight she seemed to me absolutely lovely; yet she is only a little stout woman, with ordinary features. But she has the fresh colour of perfect health, (made more brilliant by the clean white linen about her face;) her eyes are as bright as diamonds, and her smile so full of gaiety that it spreads over all the faces about her. How different she seems from the people who make a business of gaiety! I think sometimes they end by losing it altogether. But I can never understand why the very happy people, and those who give thanks all the time, are usually the ones that we should think the least fortunate. Did I ever tell you about Persiede? (I suppose she must have been christened *Prassede*, but Persiede is what she calls herself, and what everybody else calls her.) Her husband was a street-sweeper, and he was a very good man, who used to rise early, in the dark, on winter mornings, to go to church before he went to work. One very cold winter he fell ill, through exposure to the cold, and after two months he died. Persiede hurt herself by overwork in his illness, and has been herself an invalid ever since. She is old now, and feeble, and very poor, and can work little; but a kind-hearted contadino, whom she used to work for when she was strong, lets her come to him, and pack fruit for the market, and gather vine-leaves to cover it, and do such other easy work as she is still capable of, that she may not feel herself an absolute beggar. You would not call Persiede a fortunate person, would you? One day a lady gave me a dress of the *nostrale* flannel, woven at Prato, telling me to give it to some poor woman. Persiede came to see me about that time, thinly clad and looking half frozen, so I gave the dress to her. I remember that she thanked me in a lost, amazed sort of way, and slipped out of the room very quickly. I was alone at the time; but a little later, Edwige, coming up to my room, found poor old Persiede in a corner, on the stairs, crying in such a way as quite frightened her to see! She stopped to ask what was the matter; and, indeed, one might have thought that the poor woman had enough to cry about. But what do you think was the answer which (with difficulty, being so overcome by her feelings) she finally managed to sob out?—'*Because the Lord is too good to me!*' Did you ever hear any of the people who lead gay lives say that the Lord was *too good* to them? I never did."

II. POLISSENA "IN VENA"

THE STORY OF THE NECKLACE GIVEN TO THE MADONNA OF THE BLACK MOUNTAIN

I wish I had time to tell you some of the things that Polissena has been telling me: she was, as they say, "in vena" to-day; and it has been one succession of curious stories and remarks. Every subject spoken of

brings in some story by way of illustration. Here is one, to show that a good deed once done should never be repented of.*

"You have heard of the Madonna of Montenero?[1] She is a very miraculous Madonna indeed! One time a blind girl went to see her, with her mother. And the blind girl wore a very beautiful necklace about her neck; and she promised, if her sight were restored, that she would give the necklace to the Madonna. And as she knelt in the church, suddenly the light came to her eyes, and she saw as well as any one. So she hung up her necklace in the church, and came away very happy. But on the road she grew thoughtful, and when her mother said to her, Clementina, this is a great mercy that you have received! she answered, Yes; but I am without my necklace! When suddenly she felt the necklace about her neck; and, at the same moment, the light went out from her eyes. She took the necklace back to the Madonna afterwards, but she never saw again."

III. FRANCESCA'S BEE

But as for my bee, one bee of the same kind looks very much like another, and I cannot say *certainly* that the same one comes back every year; only this much *is* certain, that a very large and magnificently beautiful dark-blue bee, with brilliant transparent wings, *precisely like sapphire,* (and always *apparently* the same,) has come to my terrace, now, every spring for the last six or seven years, usually also making me a visit in my working room: and he is so gentle that he will let me stand close by and watch him while he gathers honey. I shall never forget my horror when a lady told me once that I ought to kill that bee, and give him to some collector. (But she meant no harm, for she did not know of our friendship.)†

Here *is* my bee, flown into the room just as I began to write! He makes himself perfectly at home, examining all the flowers, and hums about as if he were in a field, often close to my face. I wonder if he knows me! Polissena, who has kept bees, says‡ that they are "blessed of the Lord," and that, whenever one goes to the hive, one should ask for a blessing in the Lord's name. She says, if one omits this custom "the bees don't like it!"

It is certainly true that bees like to be talked to; and that they know their masters, and become attached to them; and some people whom I

* Does not Polissena think the story shows a little more than that?

† Sorella, dear, it is far worse to do or think harm, in folly than in passion. That is one of the chief things I have had to reiterate in *Fors;* I will look the places up for you.[2]

‡ Was this on the "in vena" day?

[1] [Of this pilgrimage church, on a hill three miles from Leghorn, there is an interesting account, with an illustration of the wonder-working picture of the Madonna, in Mr. Montgomery Carmichael's *In Tuscany,* 1901, pp. 139–142.]

[2] [Compare, for instance, Letters 42, "Heaven is in no sense merciful to fools," and 48, the calamity of thoughtlessness (Vol. XXVIII. pp. 99, 213), with Letter 23, the sins "done in hot blood or cold blood" (Vol. XXVII. p. 412).]

knew once, who undertook to keep bees on scientific principles, without making companions of them, made a miserable failure of it; but perhaps that had nothing to do with it. They are curious creatures; I don't believe we know much about them.

You will like to hear, Sorel, that mine have built, now these three years, in the roof of the Brantwood dining-room, which I built the walls of, and *planned* the roof,—but was surprised to hear afterwards from the builder that he would not like me to put flower-pots on it. Any way, the bees found it comfortable inside. They swarmed round the turret, and the servants were surprised to see me walk through the musical mist of them. But people say I have no "small talk," so I didn't try my wits at them. They found a hole in the slates somewhere,—went in,—and we have never been able to get an ounce of honey out of them since; though just before I left this last August, for St. Albans, they were in a great fuss at the edges of the slates, going out and in like ants.—J. R., *Sept.* 1887.

IV. ENRICHETTA'S NIGHTINGALES

Enrichetta lets no one shoot or annoy the birds about her villa at Viesca, and (as they soon find out where they are safe) a whole tribe of nightingales has taken possession there, and you can imagine what music she has. I have heard one, when I was in the shady walk in her garden, begin that long, sweet whistle of his close beside me, almost within reach of my hand; and then go on with such a song as took my breath away, not minding my presence in the least!

V. ROSITA AND ANGELINA

I am afraid that this letter which I am writing you to-day will not be a very lively one, for I have had a sober time since my return, having had Angelina ill again, and her husband away, and no one with her but Rosita, the pretty excitable South American niece of whom I wrote you from Bassano, and who brought such an element of gaiety into our quiet life there, that I felt myself quite lost for a while. I should as soon have thought of being taken care of in illness by a Brazilian humming-bird; but, would you believe it? that "fiamma di fuoco," as we used to call her at Bassano, turned out to be the most tender and devoted of nurses, and the most judicious, too. She never went out of the house, received no visit from any one, and refused altogether to leave her aunt for even a short time, eating and sleeping by her bedside; and seemed to know by a

sort of instinct exactly what should be done for her relief. How little we know about people until we see them in trouble!

But now I want to tell you about what I call a wonderful Providence, with regard to these friends of mine, which came about, *indirectly*, through you. Mammina was saying this morning, that everything relating to you seems to bring a blessing not only to us but to others. On the first day when Angelina was able to sit up, as I sat near her, they began to ask me about you, and your illness this summer,[1] and I told them, among other things, about those three texts in the Bible, which I touched as if by accident. They seemed very much impressed, and I told them also about the lily, and Polissena's prophecy, and about how kind my cousin Joan was, and all the rest. The next day Angelina sent Rosita to see me; she was very pale and quiet, being quite worn out with what she had been through, in Angelina's illness. As soon as she was seated in my room, she asked me if I could let her see the book in which I found those beautiful words. There was a Testament on the table; a very pretty copy, which I had just bought to give to my little sposo Pierino. I showed it to her; she had never seen one before; and as she opened it at random, and began to read, she was utterly overpowered by the beauty of what she found. Her eyes filled with tears; she said that she had never heard anything like that, and we passed the rest of the visit in reading it together. When she went away, as I found she cared so much about it, I gave it to her, she promising to read a little every day. (If you had seen how she cried over the raising of Lazarus!) The next day, when I went to Angelina, she began to ask me, almost with the first breath, if I could not find a book like that for *her*. She was quite as much in love with it as her niece, and they had been reading it together all the evening; and now she says that she wants to read a little every day, like Rosita. And so Mammina has just gone up there to take her one. So the comfort that was given to me in your illness has been the means of giving comfort to two other hearts that needed and that are ready to receive it; for if the Kingdom of Heaven is for those who are like little children, it must certainly be for Angelina and Rosita.

But, as usual, my story has grown too long, and I am afraid I have not told it very connectedly, for while I was writing I have had poor Bice to see me, and one of the widows, both in much trouble, and with sad stories for me to listen to; but, thanks to you and Ida, I was able to send them away with lighter hearts than they came. Oh dear, here comes another. There seems to be no end to it to-day; and just when I wanted to have a quiet time, and enjoy myself writing to you.

I never told you what I wanted to about that good Signor Fontana, who made the first part of the journey with us, and now I have hardly left room. We were talking to him about a noble and rich lady of Bassano, (that is, her ancestors were noble, but I am afraid they used up all the nobility themselves, and did not leave her any,) who has occasioned a great deal of indignation among those old-fashioned people, by reducing the gains of her contadini, who were so poor, before, that the priest had

[1] [At the end of July 1885, Ruskin had been attacked by a fourth illness. In the little language of his correspondence with Miss Alexander, he was her "Fratello" (p. 300), and she, as his "Sorella," thus adopts Mrs. Severn as "my cousin Joan."]

to spend all his little income for them; they had no salt for their polenta, excepting what he gave them. Her excuse was that the taxes ate up so large a part of *her* gains (which was true). Fontana said that he, on the contrary, had given up the right which all padroni think they have, to take milk, eggs, fruit, and other provisions for their families from the contadini without paying for them; and he said that in consequence he gained *much more* from his land than harder masters did; as the contadini, from affection, made his interests their own, and took good care of all that belonged to him. I tell you this because it fits in so well with what you told us in the *Songs*, that the Italians can only be helped and guided by love.[1] But I think he has more right to put "Nobile" before his name than *she* has, if he *did* make his fortune out of cake and sugar-plums. Her contadini are preparing to emigrate. But the paper cuts me short. Good-bye. Love from Mammina and me.

Your affectionate

FLORENCE, *November 3rd*, 1885. SORELLA.

VI. INTO GOOD HANDS

I am delighted that you liked my little account of the royal visit to Lucca,[2] and that you think you can make use of it. One little incident, rather pretty, Edwige told me, but I do not know if it be true. There are all sorts of stories about. A contadino had come down to Lucca from somewhere in the mountains, with a petition which he wished to present to the King; but when he saw him, with his *seguito*, he did not know who he was. (Probably the poor man's only idea of a king was gathered from some picture of the Adoration of the Wise Men.) So he looked at all of them, and rather thought the King was not there, but perhaps one of those gentlemen would convey the paper to him. And being taken with the King's pleasant face, he went to him, in preference to any of the others, and put the paper into his hands, saying, "I will leave it with you, sir; I rather think I have given it into good hands." At which the King smiled, and said, "Yes, you have."

They have all gone now, and the feasts are over, the banners taken down, and only the sight of the Duomo to remind us what has been. I am not at all sorry to have the city quiet again; the only show I went to see was the flower show, where Letizia *would* take me, rather against my will; but I was glad I went, for some of the plants were very wonderful, especially the palm trees. (I will not say anything about the orchids, knowing your opinion of them.[3]) The plants "developed by cultivation" I do not care quite so much about, and often think them prettier in their natural state; but those splendid palms and tropical ferns I would never be tired of looking at.* There was one hall devoted to the sale of

* Are you ever tired of looking at the *un*splendid Arctic ones, then, Sorella?

[1] [See above, p. 223.]

[2] [Not given; but compare the account of the King's visit to Busca, near Cuneo, in Piedmont, two years before (p. 282).]

[3] [As expressed in *Deucalion*, Vol. XXVI. p. 313, and *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 46 (Vol. XXVIII. p. 183).]

vases* of flowers, pictures of flowers, etc., and among them some porcelain and terra-cotta figures; and I bought a lovely copy of the Madonna by Donatello, in basso-rilievo, for the terrace,† and paid for it *eight francs!* The strange thing was that it was almost the only pretty thing, and nobody had bought it;—and all the *ugly* things cost a great deal more, and many of *them* were sold! There was a little figure close by my Madonna, of a very vulgar, disagreeable old man, drinking something out of a cup,—thirty francs! They told me it was because that was *original*, and that such subjects were more fashionable now than Madonnas! But it is dreadful to see the representations of *old age* that seem to be the fashion just now, with all the dignity and beauty of old age left out.‡

I have been interrupted two or three times, and must now end. Only I must tell you of a rather sweeping compliment that Mammina received yesterday, for I am sure it will make you smile. I had quoted her example about something, when Edwige silenced me indignantly. "I hope, Signorina, you don't mean to compare our Signora to *other people*. She has more sense when she is asleep than they have when they are awake!"

We are going to Venice on Tuesday if nothing happens. The Rookes came to say good-bye yesterday.[1] I was sorry to part from the children, who have often brightened me up this winter when I have needed it. Laddie says he is coming back when he is a man, to buy marble at Carrara, because he means to be a sculptor. But he changes professions often. The last time I saw him he had made up his mind to be an engine-driver, and the time before that an admiral. Good-bye, and love from us both as ever; and that all may be well with you is the constant prayer of

Your affectionate

FLORENCE, *May 26th*, 1887. SORELLA.

VII. RIVALTA

My last letter from l'Abetone was to you, and now I write to you the first word from Rezzonico.[2] I am beginning soon, only the first day of October (1886) to-day, and we arrived in the evening, day before yesterday. Silvia has arranged for our annual pilgrimage to Castelfranco and the Giorgione Madonna, to-morrow; and on Monday Signor Bortolo is going to take *me* to Rivalta, to look up what information we can about the saintly Catina da Rivalta, the tavern-keeper,[3] of whom he says that she is the only human being for whom he ever felt a true veneration.

It was such a beautiful journey!§ The rose-bushes that were such masses and garlands of blossom when we went up the road in the spring,

* Vases? How far exalted, and by what skill, above a red flower-pot?
† Of Francesca's town garden, often elsewhere referred to.[4]
‡ And all its *in*dignity put in.
§ From l'Abetone.

[1] [Mr. T. M. Rooke, the artist, had been working in Florence for Ruskin: see Vol. XXX. p. lxiv.]
[2] [That is, the Palazzo Rezzonico at Bassano: see Vol. XXIX. p. 521 *n.*]
[3] [The subsequent letter, containing the information, is given above, pp. 271–277.]
[4] [As in *Roadside Songs*, p. 227; and here, pp. 289, 302.]

were all covered now with their scarlet berries, close together like strings of coral; and the fields that were then carpets of flowers, had been mown, and great flocks of sheep and lambs turned in to eat the short grass of the second growth. For the first three miles or so, the banks along the road-side were all scattered with clusters of fringed gentian, and with the splendid S. Pellegrino thistle, nearly as large as a sun-flower, pure white, and shining like mother-of-pearl, (do you know it?)* And then we came into the country of blackberries and bluebells, and so on to S. Marcello, among the chestnut trees, where we passed the night.

I have lost a lovely bit of a Francesca letter, first disclaiming all power of describing or drawing Catina's country, and then gradually kindling and glittering into lights and shades on it; till, pushed to do what she can for me, by my total ignorance of anything but the blue outlines of the Alps beyond Bassano seas, like purple clouds from Venice, she begins delightfully thus:—

The road all the way from Bassano to the Sette Comuni is the most beautiful that can be imagined, especially in the higher parts, where it winds often through woods filled with the most beautiful of mountain flowers; and at nearly every turn we see the great plain spread out beneath us like the sea, widening always (in appearance) under our eyes as we ascend, sprinkled with cities and villages, and with hills rising out of it like islands. Finally, after a day's journey, about sunset, one finds oneself in another plain, (or rather a great stretch of undulating country,) very high up in the air. One of the great "altopiani" of the Alps; the inhabitants say, *the* great altopiano, the most wonderful of all. But it is only fair to say that I saw it under unfavourable circumstances. 1882 was a year of drought, and of much suffering among the cattle; the grass was burnt and dry, the ponds were shrunken into pools with wide margins of baked clay; and the road was fine white dust that every breath set in motion. One peculiarity of the country is that you never feel as if you were among the mountains at all. The horizon on all sides is low, and not very distant; the ground forming itself everywhere into long low swells. But constantly as one draws near the edge, the top of some far-away mountain of wild and fantastic shape rises in sight, so distant as to appear little more than a blue shadow in the sky, and makes one remember, for a moment only, the immense country between it and us, lying almost under our feet. And if one goes far enough to find a looking-off place, the precipices which divide us from the lower world are something terrible to see! There are fir woods in the country, one not more than half a mile from Asiago, where we often went; but the road to it was bare, dusty, and dismal, and Asiago itself was of unpromising appearance at first sight. It

* Well, I'm afraid not, little Sorel; but you know, the *flavour* of thistle is all that concerns *me! You* can find solar phenomena in them, of course, be they no bigger than daisies.

consists of one long street paved with round pebbles, and houses on each side,—but such houses! They were roofed with thatch, (often black and decayed,) or else with wooden shingles; and (to avoid danger from fire) there were no external chimneys! The smoke escaped through a hole in the back of the fireplace, and of course blackened all the side of the house. There was a small church dedicated to St. Sebastian, with a simple but very pretty old steeple, the only thing deserving the name of architecture in the place; and there was a large new church standing a little back from the town, not handsome, but interesting, as having been built by the people themselves under the instigation of certain missionaries who travelled through those mountains some years ago, and held what the Americans would call "revival services"; on which occasion the old church was found to be too small. The new church looked too large for the town, but was always well filled on Sunday, when troops of contadini poured in from the country around. As for the farm-houses, and little villages in the country, they were in appearance wretched beyond anything that I ever saw in Italy. A Tuscan contadino would hardly put his cattle in such hovels. And all this was the stranger, because the country, in most respects poor, was very rich in building materials, having great quantities of both red and white marble. The land seemed mostly poor, the few trees were stunted, and the fields were fenced with upright slabs of marble, set in rows and round at the top, so as to give the impression of gravestones,—a sad substitute for the Tuscan hedges. All these are first impressions. On the other hand, in the city the windows and little balconies (of wood or hammered iron) were filled with beautiful plants, especially geraniums and carnations, which blossomed out as the season advanced; and it was generally confessed, even by strangers, that there were no such carnations anywhere as those of Asiago for size and colour.

And I soon found out that Asiago put decidedly its "worst foot foremost." The houses were much better within than without, having large comfortable rooms with rather low ceilings of fir beams, and floors (if I remember rightly) of fir planks, uncarpeted and unpainted, but kept very clean, and showing the pretty grain of the wood. And most of these houses had carefully-kept gardens behind them, unseen from the street. Many of the inhabitants were wealthy people, (their property consisting for the most part, like that of the patriarchs, in cattle,) and nearly all were intelligent and well instructed, paying great attention to learning. You ask me what has kept them so intelligent, honest, and pious; but these are questions that I cannot answer.

Meanwhile I have been reading a book by Signor Nalli,[1] in which I find that our friend Catina came of a very ancient and honourable family—Benetti. For you must know that our Asiago friends are very particular about genealogies, and follow them up to remote antiquity. The tradition uniformly received among the people is that the altopiano of the Sette Comuni was settled by the Cimbri, who took refuge in that nearly inaccessible country after their defeat by the Romans under Caius Marius, in the year 104 B.C. Other tribes came there afterwards, but the people usually call themselves *Cimbri*, and a language called "Cimbro" still exists among them, though beginning to die out. There is one priest who still

[1] [G. Nalli: *Studi intorno ai bosci dei Sette Comuni*, Vicenza, 1878.]

preaches in it, and some devotional books have been printed in Cimbro at the printing-office of Asiago. These Cimbri had a purer faith than their conquerors, and adored one God, (probably the true one,) called in their language I E S I V (written in Cimbrian characters I S 8). And six families of Asiago prove the purity of their descent by Cimbrian characters on their shields, of whom one, the Benetti, bear the Divine name itself. (The contadine families have still the habit of eating from dishes marked with the name of our Lord.) All of which looks as if Catina's family were pious people, even to the most remote generation. The Benetti house stood nearly opposite to the tavern of the Golden Star, where we lodged at Asiago.

VIII. ST. MARK STILL PREACHES

VENICE, *July* 1887.

For myself I am glad to be here again, after a winter troubled in many ways. Every day we go to St. Marco, and I have never seen the time yet when I was ready to leave it. There never was such another church; every year when we come back it seems more beautiful than when we left it. Mammina takes the *Stones of Venice*, and reads us the explanation of the mosaics, etc., which adds greatly to both our enjoyment and understanding of them. She reads it in Italian, translating as she goes along, that Signor Bortolo and Edwige may enjoy it all with us. Yesterday she was reading outside of the church; it was the passage at page 147[1] describing the "archivolt on the left hand of great entrance," and we were comparing it carefully, word by word, with the original, when a workman in his shirt sleeves, crossing the square, stopped behind her and listened with the deepest interest to it all. When he saw that he was observed, he drew back a step, but immediately returned and remained until the end. There is one passage (and only one so far as I have gone) in the book which does not quite agree with my experience. I mean the one in which you say that the old mosaics have no longer any power over people's minds.[2] I think that simple people still feel the power of those simple pictures; they came from the heart, and they go to the heart, and always will, I believe.* The other day Edwige and I—the others had left us—were standing near the mosaics of St. Christopher, in the atrio, when I heard an excited voice close behind us, "I wonder if you know what it means." I turned, and saw a little old woman, with a bright, sweet, sensible face, coloured like a little withered red-cheeked apple, with sparkling black eyes, and a black shawl drawn over her beautiful silver hair. And without waiting for an answer, she broke out

* Yes, when the head is strong enough to show them the way. Edwige, and the little old woman with the bright, sweet, *sensible* face, are not to be classed wholly among "simple" people, any more than Francesca herself.

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[1] [The reference is to vol. i. of the "Travellers' Edition"; vol. ii. ch. iv. § 49 in the complete *Stones of Venice:* see now Vol. X. p. 115.]

[2] [In the same chapter, § 15 (Vol. X. p. 84).]

into her explanation of the mosaic,—not much like one of yours, but very good in its way. (I thought her rather patronising towards St. Christopher, whom she kept calling "poveretto," but she used the word affectionately, and, being herself of great age, had, I thought, a certain grandmotherly feeling towards him.) And she told the story in Venetian, with great expression, unconsciously acting it all out with her small withered hands, in the most graceful and natural manner possible. It was plain that she felt quite certain it was every word true. Edwige said (I thought with much reason) when we left the church, "I think the people who built this church must have been very wise; but the church itself is made for common people, because it is all arranged so that we can understand it. The pictures are all stories out of the Gospel, and there are no learned inscriptions, but only simple words. When our Lord says" (and she looked at the mosaic over the door) "that He is the gate, and any one who enters by Him will be saved, it needs no learning to understand what He means, the most ignorant person can take it in." (Oh dear, I wish all those who are *not* ignorant could take it in.) "And would not you be happy, Signorina, if you had painted that picture? I think the man who painted the Lord Jesus in that way had a right to be contented afterwards. I don't suppose he was, though." And with this philosophical reflection she ended for the time, but the other day she talked with me a good deal about her spiritual affairs; and I was sorry to find her troubled with certain apprehensions about her own condition, which I do not think such a good Christian ought to have. She went so far as to say that she would rather take my chance for heaven than her own! I told her that she would make a great mistake, because, as she had done a great deal more in this world than ever I had, we might hope that she would have a higher place in the other. And what *do* you think she said? You would never guess, so I must tell you. "But I have enjoyed so much more of the *pleasures of this world* than you have!" When I came to ask, I found that the "pleasures" consisted mostly in her five children. But, do you know, she always talks as if her life had been singularly happy, and says that she should like to go back and live it over again.

IX. ENRICHETTA'S CHARITY

I have two or three things left to say about our dear Enrichetta,[1]—of her charity, which she kept so carefully concealed. For she always seemed to be as much ashamed of her good deeds as other people are of their bad ones; and it was only by chance, and in the course of long years of intimate friendship, that I found out what I tell you now. Nobody was fallen too low for her compassion. She would ask into her house those against whom all other doors were closed. She would visit hospitals, prisons, (that is, the prisons where women are confined,) she would obtain leave from the authorities to pass an hour alone with a prisoner, to see if by some means she could reach her heart with kind words, and talk of

[1] [See above, p. 290; and below, p. 321. The latter passage was in an earlier letter (1884).]

the Lord's goodness. She was exceedingly and even passionately religious; and people who were regarded by others with disgust or contempt, were, to her, only so many souls that her Lord had died for. Gentle and pitiful she was to the worst of them; always inclined to the indulgent side with others, though with herself perhaps a little over-scrupulous. She was convent-educated; and her servants thought that her death was hastened by her observance of the fasts in Holy Week. Still, this was not so much a matter of conscience with her, as an affectionate clinging to the customs in which she was brought up. She gave largely in money, but always secretly. It was her maid, who lived with her for thirty years, who, after she was gone, told me of her constant, great, hidden charities. But I have said enough: of what she was as a friend, I have not the heart to speak. Her judgment was equal to her heart, and we went to her for advice about everything—in this world and the next—and have great reason to be thankful that we did so. She was a beautiful woman; tall, dark-haired, dark-eyed, fresh-coloured, with delicate regular features; but she had something so much better than beauty, that one hardly noticed it. Her face seemed all illuminated with the sweetness and goodness of her spirit; but that was not all either. I do not know how to say what I mean; but it was the face of one who lived more in heaven than on earth. She could enjoy the things of this world, too, and knew how to use them. She and her son employed much of their great fortune in buying old, ruined, worn-out estates, putting the houses and land in order, and making the contadini comfortable; and they have left everything a great deal better than they found it. She did not care for display, neither would her religion permit it; but everything about her was handsome, simple, and the best of its kind; and for old-fashioned comfort, good order, and hospitality, her house will hardly be matched again in Florence.

V

"ADDIO, CARA!"

I. KINDNESS OF THE WILD WEST

THE following is a fragment of a letter of Francesca's to Joanie, while I was lately ill;—the reliquary was that given me by the Capuchin monk in Rome in 1874; see *Fors*, Letter 56,[1] and contained without any doubt such minute relics as it professed to contain, of St. Francis, and some other less known saints of his time.

For the message from Illinois I am myself deeply thankful; but must try in future not to make friends anxious for me, far or near, for such time as may yet be left me, in this new world of theirs.—J. R., *October*, 1887.

Polissena came yesterday, and you may imagine my pleasure in presenting her with the beautiful reliquary, but I do not think you can imagine hers in receiving it; her face changed, and lighted up as if the sun had suddenly shone upon it. First she kissed it reverentially, holding it for a moment pressed to her lips; then she sat and looked at it for a long time during which it was impossible to make her hear anything that was said to her. She will write her thanks herself, in a letter which she has promised to bring me on Sunday, and which I will send to you, and you to my Fratello, when the right time comes. I could not talk much with Polissena yesterday, because some American ladies came to see us, and kept me busy in different ways. One of them was from Illinois, and she is a very devout disciple of my Fratello, and wanted to see me entirely for his sake. She tells me that his influence for good in the wild west country of America is immense. When he was ill two years ago, in every little country town of Illinois (and she thought also in the other states) the feeling was so great and universal that placards were pasted on the wall twice a day telling of his condition;[2] and when she was in Scotland last year, and he was ill again, she seemed quite scandalized that there were no placards, and she had to wait for the newspapers.

[1] [Vol. XXVIII. p. 385.]

[2] [Compare the account of Italian sympathy on the occasion of Ruskin's illness in 1878: Vol. XX. p. xxxiv.]

II. ROSSINI'S RETURN TO FLORENCE

In a following letter ("Addio, Cara!") Francesca says of Angelina that she seldom sang sad music, but usually some pure piece of melody from Mozart or Rossini. It will never be known, either from my works or my biographies, how much thought I have myself given to music,[1] in the abstract forms of melody which correspond to the beauty of clouds and mountains. The modern musician *cannot* study them, because the rival skills of instrumentation, and the confusion of passionate acting with abstract music, have rendered it impossible to get any singers to submit to the training which would enable them to give a single passage rightly, either from Rossini or Mozart; and few readers but her poor Fratello will understand the meaning of what Francesca tells us, of her sweetest friend.—J. R., *October*, 1887.

I believe I left off my last little note of thanks, when so many people came in about the festa; for the Rossini procession[2] passed just under our balcony, and, of course, all our friends, who had nowhere else to go, remembered us! I did not want at all to stop my writing for the sake of the celebration; but I could not leave Mammina with everybody to see to, and no one to help her; and really it was a very grand sight; and it was quite beautiful to see how the dense crowd in the Piazza made room, and stood back quietly, to let the long procession pass. Of course you will see an account of it all in the papers; but they will hardly tell of the respectful and deep feeling shown by all the people. But then it is quite wonderful how good a Florentine crowd will be, when there are no policemen about;—when there *are* any, they appear to awaken the worst feelings in the Florentine heart. They say that when the King and Queen came here last, they were particularly requested to come without guards, or escort of any kind; and were told that, if they brought any, the Florentines would consider themselves insulted.

It was very solemn and impressive to see Rossini brought back to Florence to the sound of his own music, played as I never heard it played before. For they had brought together all the best bands in Italy;

[1] [On this subject, see the Introduction to Vol. XXXI. pp. xxxiv., xxxv.]

[2] [The remains of Rossini, transported to Italy from the Paris cemetery of Père Lachaise, reached Florence on May 2, 1887. The reception of the remains, as they were brought from place to place in Italy, was marked by striking manifestations of popular veneration for the composer's memory. On May 3 the remains were interred in Santa Croce, the streets through which the procession passed being strewn with flowers (see *Pall Mall Gazette*, May 3 and 4, 1887).]

and I wish you could have heard "Cujus animam"; you would never have forgotten it!

It was interesting to me to see the societies of all the "arts and professions," each with its banner,—including "sellers and loaders of charcoal," and "restaurant waiters." And I wonder if anywhere out of Italy those particular "professions" would think of turning out to honour the memory of a musician, even though he *were* Rossini. By the way, the charcoal people had a particularly gorgeous banner, blue and gold. I thought it ought to have been *black*,*—with a coat of arms in the middle, representing a smoking charcoal bed! †

III. THE LOVE OF THE DUOMO

I write to you on the great festa day. The bells have just been ringing, all over the city, in token that the Duomo is unveiled; and the work begun six hundred years ago is finished.[1] I am writing to you alone, here in my little room. Edwige has gone off for a first sight of her beloved church; she is entirely wild, and, after the many troubles of her life, behaves as if she were not more than sixteen. I had meant to stay at home until the excitement was over, having little heart for any sort of gaiety after all that I have lost the past winter; but she, after trying every sort of argument yesterday to induce me to go and look at the decorations in the Piazza, finally said in a grieved tone, "If the Signorina did not go to look at the Duomo, she would not be a true Florentine." Which terrible threat finally sent me down there, through the streets swarming with people like a hive of bees. But it was a grand sight! It seemed as if all the towns in the neighbourhood had emptied themselves into Florence, and everybody so proud and happy, it was a pleasure to see. Even the poorest tried to dress a little better than usual, just because they were Florentines, and this was their festa (and Edwige put on her new silk handkerchief, that she never wore before, "for love of the Duomo").[2] Banners on all the houses, gay draperies from windows and balconies; the palaces hung out their rich silks and brocades, and the poor always managed to find a bright coloured table-cloth, or *something* to look gay. I went into the church; it was hung with thousands of candles, prepared for to-day's illumination. People were passing in and out, but there was no service going on. Many were on their knees, giving thanks, I suppose. But I will not lose time in writing what you will see in all the papers. There was much that was touching, and solemn, even a little sad. Especially so to me, the revival

* Think better of it, Sorel.

† Why not rather a winter portable pan, or an angel bringing a coal to *comfort*, or kindle, spirit-*lips* with? [3]

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[1] [On May 12, 1887, the new façade of the Duomo of Florence was unveiled in presence of the King and Queen of Italy (compare Vol. IV. p. 39 *n.*, and Vol. IX. p. 236 *n.*); an interesting account of the day's doings is to be found in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of May 18, 1887.]

[2] [Compare *Art of England*, § 210 (Vol. XXXIII.).]

[3] [See Isaiah vi. 6, 7: "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from the altar; and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away."]

of the old times, *never dead in Florence*, shown by many of the shopkeepers placing over their doors the banners once belonging to their particular arts. It brought more tears than smiles, to see the grand old banner of the wool trade hanging over a pile of blankets and coarse flannel, at a shop door in Borgo S. Lorenzo. Because it was not done in a masquerading spirit, but one knew the dealer in woollens wanted to believe, and make others believe, in his relationship to the great people of the old time. And other things were altogether gay; among the rest to see the visitors from the country (some of them in the most extraordinary dresses; I saw two young girls in dresses, evidently home-made, of the red Turkey cotton generally used for linings to quilts) enjoying their very light meals in the open air, at the doors of *cafés* and restaurants, decorated with plants in full blossom. Bonciani borrowed all the best of the plants on the terrace,[1] to make what he called a "prospettiva" at the door of the hotel. A young girl yesterday in my room made the rather singular remark, "How hard it must be for people to die while the festas are going on!" To which Edwige replied, "It does not make any difference; people have to die just the same. But there will never be such another festa for a hundred years. I suppose then there will be a *centennial*, because now people have centennials for everything; but we shall not be here to see it." She sighed at the idea that we should not see the centennial of the Duomo, then her face suddenly brightened, and she said, "But perhaps they have centennials in the other world. And perhaps we shall see it if we have a good place there."

IV. THE LOCANDA AT BASSANO

The virginia creepers are all turning scarlet, and I think I never saw anything so beautiful as the place at this season. But we have been passing two or three sad days, for our dear Angelina has been taken ill at the locanda in Bassano, and we are all much occupied with her. The doctor says that there is nothing dangerous the matter with her, *for the present*, and that she will soon recover from this attack, and be as well as she was before, (which is not saying much: she has been but poorly for several years). But meantime it is very hard on us to have her suffer; and not to have her able to come to us, when she came to Bassano on purpose. We are with her every day, and find our trouble much lightened by her extreme cheerfulness and courage. When she was first attacked her only thought was, "Do not let Mammina know." She never complains of anything, but is always expressing her thankfulness for the kindness of those about her, especially of the hotel chambermaid, who strikes *me* as an untidy and far from pleasant-looking old woman; but Angelina assures me that she is "una creatura angelica." I believe the truth is that everybody becomes "angelica" with our Angelina: she is so sweet and good that one cannot help it. And then she thinks that all the people she comes in contact with are saints. The chambermaid is the favourite; but I am also constantly hearing of the celestial virtues of the landlord, the landlady, the waiter, and the little boy who goes errands: and she lies there quite happy

[1] [See above, p. 293 *n.*]

in her imaginary Paradise of the little hotel chamber, perfectly helpless, but doing us all more good than a dozen people who can work. Yesterday Silvia was not well, and had a good deal all day to worry her, and when I asked her in the evening how it was that she had been so placid and contented through it all, she said, "It is Angelina's example, it does me so much good to see her." Angelina was the first person who ever *adopted* Mammina, and gave her that name, and to me she has been a true sister for a good many years now. Some day I will tell you more about her and her life in Peru, where she went with her husband at fourteen. Meanwhile I must not dwell on stories of sickness and trouble, and I hope in a few days she will be about again. Marina has just this minute sent us up such a platter of fruit gathered in that wonderful vineyard of hers,—great *branches* of vine, with heavy bunches of fruit hanging between the great leaves, and *such* pomegranates burst open on the tree. I said, as I caught sight of them, how I wished I could send you one of those pomegranates, for I never saw anything of the kind so beautiful.

The evenings have grown too cold now for me to sit on the doorstep and tell the children stories in the afternoon, so now we sit around the table with lighted candles, and my duties have become somewhat heavier, as all the family attend, and I have to choose some story that will please everybody, from the grandmother to little Bebo. Yesterday evening, I am sorry to say, Silvia and Pierino had a quarrel as to which should have the seat next to me to hear Beauty and the Beast, (for the third or fourth time,) and I had to make peace by putting myself in the middle, after inquiring which was the oldest child of the two—a question which nobody answered. My audience consists of Marina, who, as you know, has had a strange life of trouble and romance, and heroic adventures with Austrian soldiers and spies;—of Silvia, who has had enough to sober her, one would think, besides her poor health and scientific propensities;—of the little German governess, and the two children. Besides these we have often a friend of the family who comes in to pass the evening,—a sober, poor, hard-working, elderly schoolmistress. And they are all very critical, and will not allow me to slight any part of my story, and ask me the most difficult questions. Bebo last night *would* know who kept the Beast's palace in order, and cooked the supper; and they expect me to describe minutely the dresses that Cinderella wore to the ball, on both occasions; also her sisters' dresses. Bebo often entertains us with stories of his own, showing much power of invention and a sublime disregard of impossibilities. The other day, when his brother passed the examination, he asked why *he* could not have an examination too; (he is just six,) and his mother asked what he should be examined in; to this he replied, "Reading, writing, and telling stories."

I have just been telling one of the poor women (Bice, who sat for the Suora[1]) that you are better, and she fairly went off into tears, and said, "I *have* been praying a great deal for him, but I rather think that could not have made much difference; it is not likely the Lord Jesus would mind anything I said! Most likely He has made him well, and sent him a blessing, because He knows he is a good Signore, and has been so kind to us all!"

[1] [See below, pp. 322, 326.]

V. THE PATRIARCH OF VENICE

I am so glad at last to find myself writing to you without being in a hurry; I am taking a rest at last, but beginning already to think that I shall not care to make it a very long one. We are here at Abetone, and finding it a great deal pleasanter than we had expected. Our friends are all very glad to see us; and the strangers have hardly begun to come, so that for the present everything seems pleasant and peaceful, almost as in the old times! I was so thankful that you sent me that note to Venice, which enabled me to take the journey with so much easier mind; and now I am trying to think of all the things that I had laid aside in my head to write you about, of which I am afraid I cannot help forgetting a good many. First of all I promised, did I not? to tell you all about the Patriarch.[1] You cannot think what a strange visit we had; at least, it seemed so to me, for I had imagined him among all sorts of grand surroundings, in some magnificently furnished room, with servants in gorgeous liveries to wait outside of the door, and he himself very stately and imposing; and instead, I saw only one servant, a rather shabbily dressed little old man, gossiping with an old beggar woman in the hall; and when he made out what we wanted (he was quite deaf), he led us up the broad white marble stairs, into a large room, very clean, but furnished without the least regard to either elegance or comfort, or anything else, I should think, excepting economy. A haircloth sofa, a good deal worn, and half-a-dozen chairs to match, with two ordinary tables, were all that I saw; and the great room looked nearly empty. After a few minutes the Patriarch himself appeared, and met us with much kindness. He did not offer me his hand, but gave it to Signor Bortolo, who kissed it, bending on one knee. I need not describe his appearance, since you have his portrait, only he looks a little thinner and older now than when that was taken, and is somewhat bent, and I thought his face looked very tired and careworn. His manners are gentle and quiet, but not in the least stately; one could hardly imagine him a cardinal: he seems like a humble, gentle-spirited Christian, such as I have known so often among the poor, — not very different from Edwige's old mother; and wearing himself out for his Church, as she wore herself out for her children. He was very polite, and seemed to wish that our visit should be a pleasant one; and he was interested in whatever pleased us; but I noticed that the mention of a sacred name brought a new and singular light into his face (which is the principal sign, I think, by which one recognises the "hidden servants,"[2] and recalled to me my good minister, Signor Rossetti,[3] though in other respects the two men were so unlike each other!). When we rose to go, he accompanied us to the door, and stood holding it open for us, instead of calling a servant, as might have been expected; then he opened another door, and said, "Only see how I live!" It was a room quite as poor as the first, but with the tables and chairs quite covered with heaps of papers all lying

[1] [See above, p. 126.]
[2] [See above, p. 229.]
[3] [See above, p. 228 *n.*, and below, p. 319.]

in confusion. He sighed as he said, "All those papers must be attended to, and most of them are letters from people who have need to see me on business, and want me to appoint a time." I am afraid that he is too heavily burdened in many ways, and is perhaps one of those people who take things too much to heart. The condition of the poor in Venice seems to weigh much upon his mind; and they say that he does many things not expected of people of his rank, explaining the catechism to children, hearing the confession of obscure people, etc. He was so kind as to ask us to come and see him sometimes, when we came back to Venice; which rather surprised me, as he is so very busy; but then it proves that we have several mutual friends, and among them the dear old lady of Bassano, whom he is attached to almost as much as I am.

Now I have written such a long story about the Patriarch that I have left no room for all the other things I wanted to tell you, and that is the way it always happens! But I thought you would like to hear about him, because one does not see a living saint every day; or at least, if we do, we do not know it. Signor Bortolo says that they have a story in the Veneto that the angels come down into the Campo Santo at night with their golden censers, and burn incense at the graves of those saints whom nobody knows. And it must be a great deal pleasanter to be one of *those* saints, than like poor St. Marina. I hope she does not know how they have put her up on the altar among those dusty artificial flowers, and the priest shows her for francs![1]

VI. THE ARMENIAN IDA

Such a strange thing happened to me the other day about "Ida," and it is not much to tell; only I like to tell you everything that interests me; and this is something that has gone to my heart more than I can say. I suppose you will hardly remember Padre Alishan of the Armenian convent.* He is the oldest, I think, now, of all the frati there, and I have always looked upon him as a sort of saint; he has been our friend for a great many years. The other day I gave him a copy of "Ida." I did not suppose he would care much about it, and only gave it to him as a compliment, and because he had given me an engraving of a page of one of their Armenian manuscripts. The next day, when I was, as it chanced, alone in the house, to my great surprise the old Padre came to make me a visit. As soon as he had sat down he said, "I am glad in one way that you are

* You ought not to suppose any such thing of me, Sorel. I never forget my monk friends, I am too proud of having possessed their regard; nor had I ever any more valued than those of the lagoon-isle.[2]

[1] ["St. Marina flourished in Bithynia in the eighth century, and served God under the habit of a monk with extraordinary fervour. Her wonderful humility, meekness, and patience are celebrated in the lives of the fathers of the desert. Her relics were translated from Constantinople to Venice in 1230, and are venerated there in a church which bears her name" (Alban Butler, *Lives of the Saints*, vol. i. p. 808). An account of her legend may be read in Lord Lindsay's *Sketches of the History of Christian Art*, 1847, vol. i. pp. cliv.–clvi.]

[2] [For Ruskin's friendship with the Armenian monks at San Lazzaro, Venice, see Vol. XX. p. l.]

alone, for I have that to say to you that I should hardly know how to say if any one were present. I read the story of Ida yesterday, and it made me shed so many tears! I do not mind telling you, though I should be ashamed to tell any one else."* By this time the old gentleman was becoming rather unintelligible to me, as when he is excited he talks very fast, and mixes his Venetian Italian with Armenian in a most bewildering manner. When I next caught the thread of his discourse he was saying: "I want now to return your present with another, with something that is worthy to be kept with Ida's story,—a memorial of one who was like her, who was an angel on earth as she was, and who died as she died." He unwrapped, with trembling hands, a little packet that he had brought with him, and gave me a small photograph of a beautiful Armenian girl; and as I looked at the sweet young face, I saw, to my astonishment, that she was so like Ida! Just the same age, and the same soft eyes and delicate but distinctly marked eyebrows, the same pretty oval to the face, the same mouth and chin *precisely*, the same slight graceful throat, even the dark hair turned back from the forehead as Ida used to wear it! Much moved, I told him of the strange resemblance, and he said, "She was so like her also in character: she was my brother's daughter. I never saw her, for she was born and died after I left my country, but I loved her very dearly. Regina Satinie was her name; she was named after one of the ancient queens of Armenia. And much of what you say about Ida might have been written about her. She too felt no fear in the presence of death, and before she died she would have her hair cut off, and gave a little to each of her friends; and she disposed of all her little ornaments, and whatever else she had, and left some keepsake to every one in the family, and to each of the servants. And look here!" He showed me, on the back of the picture, her name and the date of her death, which he translated from the Armenian. She had died at Constantinople on the twenty-first of January; Ida in Florence on the twenty-second! He continued: "For some time I had resolved to separate from this picture because it had become so precious to me; I love it so much. I will not keep it with me any longer; and now *you* will keep it, and you will care for her for Ida's sake." I tried to persuade him to keep the picture himself, but he only became excited and tearful and unintelligible again. As nearly as I could understand, he did not think it right for him, a frate, to love anything earthly so much. "No," he said, "you must keep it, and when you say a prayer for Ida, you will remember to say one for her,—though I hope, I *think* that she is with Jesus already! I rather think she prays more for me than I do for her!" I said, "I do not think our friends who are gone ever forget us." "No," he answered, "they remember us, they pray for us; I think they do *everything* for us, only they never speak to us; I wish sometimes they *would* speak just one word! There was an old father in our convent who died some time ago, at a great age, and he asked us all to pray for him; and he said, if we would, he would write us a letter some day, all in characters of gold. But he has never written it yet, though we have been expecting it for quite a long time;" and the old man sighed

* I have to ask both Francesca's pardon, therefore, and her old friend's for printing this letter at all; but how else could the record have been, as the dear old Padre wished, "kept with Ida's story"?

and looked disappointed, then he added: "We buried him in the sacristy of the church, because we thought he was a saint. But all that ever happened was, that I dreamed once I heard him singing the Litany, and oh, he sang it with such devotion! I never in my life heard anything like it!" By this time a very peaceful smile had come into his face, though his eyes were tearful, and he looked like one not far off from the country of his hope. But oh, Fratello, if I had had any idea that this Armenian story (with nothing in it) was going to take so long, I would not have told it,* for it has crowded out so very much that I wanted to say. I ought to stop now.

VII. IN THE DARK VALLEY

Mio caro Fratello,—After a week of great trouble I sit down, tired and confused, to write to you, certain that I shall write nothing worth your reading, and yet not willing that Sunday should pass without a word from me. You will know before I tell you what has happened. Our dear Angelina, who has taken the place of sister to me for twenty-five years, has left us at last; gone no doubt to the heaven promised to little children and those who are like them. And this is only the fifth day. I do not quite understand it yet, but I am beginning to. One thing I do understand already, that however long I may live I shall never see such another. She passed away very peacefully in a long sleep; thank the Lord for that! They hardly knew when she was gone. But I will not dwell on the last sad days (though there has been much sweetness in them), for you have troubles enough of your own, without bearing the burden of mine. I do not think that any one ever came near her without being the better for it, and without receiving some kindness from her. She was very beautiful; (I was always sorry Mammina sent Joanie her photograph, which, though enough like her to be better than nothing, to us who knew her, does her no justice at all: like most of those fair luminous beauties, her face would never paint† well), and she was very rich, and her husband gave her everything of the most magnificent; and she was the sweetest singer that ever I heard, and every one loved her that came near her; and she had enough to turn a dozen heads, and yet she was the most simple, unworldly creature that ever I knew. She never cared to be one of the great world, in which she might have made so brilliant a figure; but lived retired, dressed simply, (she hardly ever put on the fine lace and jewels that her husband gave her; I suppose Rosita has them now,) cared no more for fashion than Polissena does, and had her house full of all the forlorn people she could find—the poor and the shabby, the broken in health and spirit, the disgraced by unworthy relations; all the people that the world had turned its back upon, found a true and warm friend in Angelina.

* You would have been very unkind, Sorel, then; it is one of the most beautiful and useful of all your stories.

† Photograph well, I think you mean, Sorella. Could not Giorgione have painted her, think you, beneath that Madonna of yours at Castelfranco?[1]

[1] ["Of yours," because Miss Alexander often went to see the picture, and always found it more beautiful than before: see her letter in *Art of England*, § 210 (Vol. XXXIII.).]

Here is a letter from Polissena, in such *very* original spelling that I don't believe you can read it, so will translate it for you. I must explain one or two things about it. The *other present* that she speaks of is a little money which I gave her some time since in your name, because it was some of what you gave me for Ida, and I thought it was yours and not mine. *Your daughter* is Joanie. When you were ill, and Polissena used to come to me for news, I told her that there was a lady who took the place of daughter to you, and wrote me news of you every day. I do not know who has read some pages of the book * to her, but I imagine it to be the Signora Bianca, an Englishwoman married at Pian Sinatico, whom I have never seen, but who is very kind about going to read to blind Teresa. Her (Polissena's) anxiety about your health is quite sincere. She always has an affectionate feeling—almost a sense of relationship—toward those whom she has once prayed for; and in all her letters she is begging for news of you. Marina is here, as you know, but this great trouble has made her quite ill. Poor Marina! after taking the long journey on purpose, she was not able even to see Angelina. I am with her every day, and yesterday she told me a story that interested me much, so much that I think I must write it to you, especially as it is very short.†

VIII. "ADDIO, CARA!"

The name of my Armenian friend is Padre Leon Alishan, one of the best men in the world, and who has written some interesting books in his own language. One, *The Life of an Armenian Saint*,[1] has been translated into French, and he gave me a copy of it. But above all I care for the honour which you pay the memory of my dear Angelina. I do not remember now what I wrote you about her; but, whatever it was, I am sure that it must have been less than the truth. Now that she is gone, we remember many things which, in her lifetime, seemed so a part of herself that we hardly thought of them,—they belonged to her just like her dimples or her golden hair. A "cuor d'oro" people used to call her; and only now we begin to understand that there are not many such golden hearts left. During a long illness of her husband, it became necessary for her to take upon herself the administration of their very large estate; at which time she astonished every one by her great business capacity, never before suspected. *He* is a scientific man, for the most part immersed in profound studies; and after his recovery he was not sorry to turn over his affairs to her keeping. And I often wonder if any great property was administered in such a way before! Sometimes, when I went to her house, the floors would be covered with flasks of wine, jars of honey, fruit, chickens, geese, pheasants,—a little of everything; it was an arrival from the estate. And in a few hours all, or nearly all, would have disappeared—gone to the

* "The Peace." [See above, pp. 259–270.]

† It will find its place in another number. [See below, p. 318.]

[1] [*S. Théodore*, Le Salahounien, Martyr Arménien, par Le P. Leonce M. Alishan: Venise, 1872. The same padre is the author of various other publications, printed at the Armenian monastery of Saint-Lazare, *e.g.*, an Armenian translation of canto iv. of *Childe Harold* (1872) and *Armenian Popular Songs* (2nd ed. 1867).]

houses of poor or sick, or in some way needy people. She never talked about it, but I knew it, because I knew so many of those whom she helped, and they used to tell me. She never seemed to care for her great wealth, excepting to make as many people happy with it as she could; indeed, she was never happy herself unless she was making some one else so. She did not do it on principle; I don't think she ever thought much about principle, for it was so natural to her to be good: she never thought about it any more than a rose thinks about being sweet. I doubt if she knew that she *was* good, though she knew enough of all the good in every one else! I think she must have known that she was beautiful, if she ever looked in the glass; but there never was a woman so indifferent to her own beauty. And how she used to sing! Just like a nightingale! You must not think that I am talking extravagances; her singing will never be forgotten by those who once heard her. Mammina says that she never heard more than one other voice in the world that would compare with hers, and that was Alboni's. I wonder if you remember it. She was a finished musician, but never cared to display her voice any more than her beauty. The most that she cared for either, was when they served to brighten a sick-room or cheer a heavy heart. When we asked her for a song, she would begin without rising from her seat,—seldom sad music, always something with a great deal of melody, usually some song by Mozart or Rossini; but there is no use in trying to tell what it sounded like.

Well, she had her troubles, poor Angelina! She was a great sufferer for many years in health, though she was so cheerful and courageous that few ever suspected it; and then she always attached herself to all the infirm, and sick, and very aged people: and broke her heart when any of them died. And she bore everybody's troubles as well as her own; and I am glad, sometimes, to think that she is at home, and at rest. Almost the last time that I saw her, (and it was only a few days before she died,) a poor woman, a servant, had been sent to the house on an errand. Angelina asked to have her brought into the room, saying that the woman had been ill, and she wanted to see with her own eyes how she was. I was sitting by the bedside, and I remember as if I saw it still, how Angelina raised herself up, and took the pale, tired woman's hand in hers, and sat talking with almost sisterly interest of her ailments, of her poverty, of her absent family, etc. Then she ordered a meal to be prepared for her, and would have it served in the chamber that she might see if she ate it, and sat up again to look and see if she finished all. I saw her give her something else in her hand,—I don't know what it was,—and I still seem to hear her cheerful "Addio, cara!" as the invalid woman went, rested and refreshed, from the door. She knew then that the end was close at hand; but somehow she never made much account of dying.

Fratello, you must excuse me if this time my heart has run away with my pen; but your sympathy has encouraged me to write you a little of what I am so often thinking over. Good-bye for now; and love always from Mammina and

Your affectionate

SORELLA.

BASSANO VENETO,
Di 27 *September* 1887.

VI

LIETI ANDIAMO[1]

I. THE KNITTING FOR CESIRA

The fields and hedges at Cascina are one garden of roses, honeysuckle, acacia, gladiolus, crimson and rose-coloured lupin, and other flowers; the wheat, just now in blossom, grows in some places so as quite to conceal the trunks of the olive trees, and the branches rise out of it like grey islands out of a level green sea; and the roses and geraniums in the little gardens of the contadini are a sight to look at! The people generally look prosperous, healthy, and happy, and the children playing barefoot about the doors are perfect pictures of blooming beauty. The other evening, when Letizia was walking out with me, she stopped to speak to a pretty red-cheeked dark-eyed baby, just beginning to go alone, standing at the knee of an old woman, its grandmother, in the porch of a little old stone cottage, among some red geraniums. After we had passed, she told me part of a story which I afterwards heard more fully from some of the people here. The poor baby's mother died last summer in the cholera at Spezia, and the father made his escape to Cascina with his child of three months old, only to be "sequestrated" by the carabinieri, and shut up in the temporary Lazaretto. (The country people call them *cherubinieri*, but do not appear to regard them as cherubim, by any means.) There was nothing there for the baby to eat, that it could eat, and the poor little thing seemed likely to starve. The father's sister, Clorinda, would wait outside of the wall, and hear the baby cry without being able to go to it, until she was half distracted; but everybody in these parts was in a state of blind and unreasoning terror, and nobody would help her. So she went to one and another with her story, and at first the "Cherubinieri" stood firm to their idea of duty, and were as hard as the stone wall itself; but at last they yielded to her continual tears and prayers,—and then what do you think they did? Took off all the poor baby's clothes and burnt them, and then *fumigated* it thoroughly, and put it into her arms in that condition, half-famished! Poor Clorinda's troubles were not over yet; not a woman in the place would be nurse to the child, and she herself was avoided as if she had the plague; everybody ran away from her. But she bought a goat, which had more sense than the rest of the population; and now the child is a bright handsome little fellow as ever I saw. Clorinda is now servant in the house where we are staying, and often comes out into the garden where I work, to gather herbs for the cooking; an easy-tempered, light-hearted little woman, whom nobody would suspect of anything heroic!

[1] [See the hymn, below, p. 320.]

But I must end this, if I expect to do any work to-day; and there is so much more I should like to tell you about this pretty old town! If you could see the market, which is held early in the morning under the plane trees; it is so pretty to see the contadine women with their piles of freshly-gathered artichokes, cabbages, etc., under the changing lights and shadows of the leaves. (I saw a woman the other day, who, after making her purchases, went into church to her devotions with an enormous cabbage in each hand; which looked odd, but I dare say she did not say her prayers any the worse for them.) Edwige is as happy as the day is long, dividing her time between country excursions, the church, and knitting with me in the garden. Yesterday she had just finished a pair of very pretty fine stockings, and I asked her who they were for; she answered, "For Cesira; her little girl will wear them for her."[1] "But," I said, "they will be too large for little Sandrina." "Never mind," she said; "when I am away from home I like to knit stockings for all my daughters, and I always knit Cesira's pair first. Sandrina will wear them when she is older; perhaps I shall not be alive then!"

Cascina, *May 26th*, 1885.

II. THE STORY OF THE SAVINGS BANK

I knew a poor widow who hired two or three rooms and under-let one of them to a woman poorer than herself. The lodger was not able to pay for it, and the widow needed the money for her own rent, and she said to me, with an enthusiastic fervour of charity, that set her face all in a glow, "I will not—I *cannot* turn her out! I will sell my earrings first."

But to go back to the charity cart in the cholera time.* My dear Angelina threw her fine house-linen, sheets, bed-covers, etc., into the cart by the armful, and then her own clothes, and her husband's clothes, until the crowd below burst out into an Evviva! To be sure Angelina always kept a great deal of linen on hand, because, when she knew any poor women who wanted work, she used to let them come to the house and sew for her, saying that the linen would come in use some time or other; and so it did, but not usually for herself. Oh what a loss she is! and what a pity that more people will not take to being good, when *one* good life is such a blessing in a city. Somebody had an Evviva the other day, or rather, two persons had it, a little boy of five, and his sister of four, outside Porta Romana. When the car came by, they threw in their toy savings bank, which was afterwards found to contain four francs in copper. They are the children of good people; their mother lived in the house with Edwige's Cesira, and was very kind to her in her illness, and took her poor little girl home to take care of. An unknown friend, who heard

* The letter referring to it has not yet been printed;[2] but see the following one of the way the cholera was met at Venice.

[1] [Cesira, it will be remembered, had died some years before: see above, pp. 229, 231.]

[2] [And never was.]

the story, sent the children (anonymously) another savings bank, with *sixteen* francs, and a message to the effect that the Lord renders *fourfold;* but I think He means to render them a great deal more this time; for I have just left off writing to ask Edwige some questions about the children, and it seemed to be a providence, for she told me that their elder sister is very ill, supposed to be past hope. Now the Mammina knows exactly what to do for the particular kind of illness that this poor girl has, and has, with the Lord's help, cured two or three cases where the doctors could do nothing; so I ran downstairs to her. And only see how everything works in! The first medicine wanted is a particular kind of wine, and dear Angelina, last Christmas Day, sent us a large supply of just that very wine from her estate, much better than any that one can buy (besides two other kinds), and Mammina had locked it all up, because she could not bear to see it, much less to use it. But now she has given me the first bottle for the poor girl, and we think it will bring her a blessing, and she will live. Oh! how fast I am filling up my paper; and I have not told you about a poor man who lives next door to Edwige, and who threw into the cart a whole suit of clothes down to the *shoes*. He obeyed the Gospel precept, that he who has two coats should give to him that has none, for I do not think he had more than two.

I used the first daylight this morning in a very delightful way, reading the last *Præterita*,[1] which I enjoyed as I always do. I think even you hardly ever wrote anything so beautiful as that description of the country church and graveyard at sunset; which has stayed in my mind all day, no matter what I have been doing, as if I had seen some beautiful picture. Also your studies of the growing grass and leaves,[1] which my own dear father so loved to study, and taught me to love. I have never known any one, excepting you and him, who looked at plants just in that way; he had never studied them scientifically, but was never tired of finding out new beauties and wonders in them, and regarded even the most common with deep reverence, saying that they showed so plainly the work of the Almighty hand. I remember, when I was a small child, his explaining to me the meaning and beautiful arrangement of the leaves, blossom, stalk, and roots, of a clover plant, with as reverential feeling and manner as another would have used in explaining a chapter of the Bible. And strangely enough, he saw many other things as you see them, especially pictures. He was a great believer in Carpaccio, *per esempio*, before you had ever taught people to care for him.

III. ROSITA, AND GIACOMO BONI

We are all feeling pretty sober here about the cholera, which we do not fear for ourselves (having been in the way of it twice before, and Mammina knows exactly what to do, and is better than a dozen doctors), but it is dreadful to hear of it creeping all about the country, and now it is within six miles of Bassano, which may the Lord preserve. Marina had

[1] [Chapter x. of vol. ii., issued in March 1887. The description of the church and graveyard is in § 202; the studies of grass and leaves are in §§ 199, 200. The passage in *Præterita* is from Ruskin's diary of 1847.]

been ill herself, but when she heard that there were some cases at Bessica, where the family estate is, she immediately went there (though none of her own people were as yet attacked), and is now busy nursing and doctoring. She writes to me, "They have blind faith in my care" (as well they may have!), "and I trust that by taking precautions in time the danger may soon be removed." A pleasant contrast, this, to what Signor Bortolo Zanchetta writes us of the poor contadini of Bassano, who are dying because they will not take the medicines offered them, "for fear of being poisoned"! Only think what sort of padroni they must have had, to feel so! My poor Marina is all alone in her charitable work, for Silvia and Peppino have been called to Cesena to assist an old uncle, very ill. I heard this morning that he had died; the last one left of Peppino's immediate family. I fear it will be a heavy grief to him. There have been a few suspected cases in Florence, but nothing for the last three days, so I hope our city may be spared. But they have organised the society of the Croce Rossa to be prepared for any emergency, and one of the first to join it was Angelina's niece, Rosita, who sent in her name without telling her uncle and aunt what she was doing, for fear that they would refuse their consent. If the cholera comes, she will be spared neither labour nor danger, and it is something that goes to all our hearts to see this young beautiful woman, only twenty-five, and the mother of two little children, thus taking her life in her hand for people who do not belong to her. When Angelina spoke to her of the danger, she said: "I am not afraid; it is as much my business as any one's, and people should not be deserted because they are sick and poor: if I die you will take care of the children; or if you do not, my father and mother will." And she said to me, when I spoke to her apart, "When we have a *call* everything is easy!"—raising her eyes to heaven as she spoke, with a look as though she heard the "call" pretty plainly. As I wrote you once before, there is just this much comfort about the terrible visitations which, for some years past, have come so often to this poor country, that they do bring out so much of the best side of human nature! Your friend Boni[1] is in the midst of it all in Venice. He was in Germany, having finally been able to commence the journey which he had been looking forward to for years, but gave it all up that he might be of use to the sick, and their families in Venice. He writes me a heart-breaking account of the poverty there, especially in the parish where he is visiting, S. Nicolo dei Tolentini. He is employed by the municipality to distribute provisions among the survivors in the stricken houses. But I think I had better not write you any more of these things, which are what our hearts and heads are full of just now. I do not want *yours* to be full of them. And here is a note from Silvia, contradicting the report of her uncle's death, for which I am most thankful. And I have now received your delightful letter of the fifth, and you hardly ever wrote me a letter that made me so happy, because I see that you really are becoming yourself again, and that, as I supposed, your strength comes with the summer. I enjoyed so much the account of your excursion down to the Waterfall, and the five children at the gate, and your tea in the country with the dog. It

[1] [For Commendatore Boni, and Ruskin's friendship, see Vol. XXIV. p. xli., and *Art of England*, § 19 (Vol. XXXIII.).]

appears to me that I never had a meal in a country tavern in my life, that the particular dog which you describe, "gentle and modest, but extremely hungry," did not walk in to share it with me! And only to think of your being already half through *Præterita!* My only fear is now, that you will use up your strength too fast as it comes. Do pray "hold back" as much as you can! But, Fratello, I could not help being surprised to find that *you* were surprised to see how much I cared for your letters. I never thought to tell you of it, because I supposed you knew. Does not *everybody* care for your letters?—though probably not just in the way that I do. It would not be fair, though, to let it pass for the fault of the bank that the letters were not sent to Cascina when they should have been. It was all owing to a mistake in my own letter to the banker, giving directions where and how to send them. And I am sorry that you do not like my address, but what can we do about it? It would look very pretty to have the letters directed to a shepherdess or gipsy, but my friends of those denominations do not, generally, know how to read, so there would be some inconvenience about it. However, if you like, you might send the answer to *this* one directly here to the house, for I think we shall certainly be here for another week, possibly more. The weather is not very hot yet, and a dear friend, whom we have not seen for years, has come to stay for a little while in Florence, and we do not want to leave her immediately. She is Giannina Milli, the most distinguished improvisatrice in Italy, and a grand woman in every way. Did I ever tell you about her coming to meet dear old Beatrice at our house at l'Abetone? *

Firenze, *Di* 10 *Giugno*, 1886.

IV. THE STORY OF SANTA ROSA

What do you think Bice's little Virginia of six years said to her the other day? She said, "Mammina, I wish you and I were just of an age, and then we should always live together, and when one of us died the other would, and we could go away together. I am so sorry you are older than I." Her mother said, "But I cannot help it." To which the little one answered, in a very pathetic and appealing tone, "But at least do not try and be any older than Adelina." Adelina is her elder sister.

Yesterday I began this letter immediately after receiving yours, but was not able to finish it, as I had sent for little Santa Rosa to finish some parts of the picture [1] that were not quite to my mind, and I had a busy morning trying to give the look of her silky hair and pretty little soft arms, while I told her the story of Stellante Costantina, the grand Turk's daughter, (which set Bice to crying, but then it does not take much to do that). I have finished the birds, not very satisfactorily, but as

* No; please tell me *all* about it directly.[2]

[1] [Plate XXVI. : see over leaf.]
[2] [See below, pp. 330–332.]

well as I could considering that they kept up an incessant hopping and dancing all the time; but I am glad I tried, for I do not think I ever knew how pretty birds were before, and I think if children would all try and learn to draw birds from life there would be no more shooting of birds in the next generation, and we should have a whole nation of Santa Rosas. Meanwhile, Edwige has been telling me some interesting particulars about our little saint that I never knew before. It seems that her mother died when she was a child, and her father married a woman who was not good to her. She was very small and delicate, they say; and her step-mother used to make her do work that was too hard for her . . . also the step-mother's children used to tease and torment her in many ways, because they were larger and stronger than she. Once her step-mother had sent her to the spring for water with a great earthen pitcher, larger than she could carry easily, and one of the children knocked it out of her hands and broke it, for mischief, in the hope that the step-mother would beat her; but she put the pieces together and made the sign of the cross, and the pitcher was made whole again. Another time her step-mother, who had never taken the trouble to teach her to sew, gave her some linen and told her to make a shirt, threatening her with I know not what if she failed; and she (being shut up in a room alone) dropped on her knees and prayed for help; at which a beautiful lady came in, who spoke very kindly to her, and taking the linen from her hand, cut and sewed it as no linen was ever cut and sewed before. And when the little girl showed it, and told the story, every one knew that the lady who had helped her could have been no other than the Madonna. When Edwige arrived at this part of her story, Bice asked if these miracles did not touch the step-mother's heart; at which Edwige answered, with solemnity, "Did you ever hear of anything touching the heart of a step-mother? You know the proverb: The step-mother shows her teeth at the children when she gives them bread, and combs their hair the wrong way."

I have not been able to find out much more about Santa Rosa. They say that, grown to be a woman, she had a habit of speaking the truth which did not much please people; and, as she did not shrink from reproving wickedness in high places, she was disliked and much persecuted by people in authority; but those who were in trouble, or who had any sin on their conscience, used to come to her for counsel and comfort. She had great wisdom, but cared so little for her own comfort, or for the world's opinion, that many thought her crazy while she lived, and the nuns in a Franciscan convent which she wished to enter refused to admit her, being ashamed of such company. She told them that the time would come when they would be glad to have her, as came to pass after she died, when they thought it a great honour to have her buried in their convent church.[1]

[1] [The body of S. Rosa, contained in a golden coffin, is in the church of S. Rosa at her native city, Viterbo. It is related of her that as soon as she was born she uttered the names of Jesus and Mary. She became a member of the Third Order of St. Francis, and was licensed to preach by Innocent IV. She inspired Viterbo to resist the Emperor Frederick II., of whose death she was supernaturally informed. She died in 1261.]

V. THE DOGE'S DAUGHTER

Santa Rosa is at the last touches now, and will be finished on Monday if all goes well; but I shall not send her until the end of next week,* because I want to send Santa Marina with her, who still has need of a little more finishing.[1] I am almost certain that Santa Rosa will disappoint you; you probably have some such different picture of the subject in your mind.

As you sometimes speak as if you were interested in countesses,† I must tell about one who came to see me the other day, aged three years; a descendant of those doges of the Tiepolo family who did so much for Venice once upon a time, as you know. The young lady would have nothing to say to me at all, and it was in vain that I tried to tempt her with fruit or cake, or with songs or stories; she would not leave her mother's side. But her mother wanted to see what I was drawing, and I brought in Santa Rosa; and no sooner did the child see it than she brought her little chair and placed it before me, then planted herself there, and remained absorbed in deep study of the picture. When I thought she had seen enough of it I took it away, but she made a sign with her little hand for me to bring it back, and it was long indeed before she would let it go.

I am writing badly enough to-day, but I am trying to write without looking at all, as my eyes will have quite as much work as they can do later in the day, so you must try and have patience, and I will try and not make the letter very long if I can help it.

VI. HOW ST. PETER LOST HIS TEMPER

I do want so much to write out for you one of the stories from Edwige's gospel, that she told me the other day, and which she fully believes.

I have made her tell it two or three times, so as to write it as nearly as possible in her own words. She was talking about a quarrel among the gondolieri, in which some had succeeded in having some of the others turned out of employment; and she said: "It seems all very sad; one ought to be willing to live and let others live. When God made the

* When sent, I serenely took possession of it, and gave it, without even asking Francesca's leave, to my child-society of "Friends to Living Creatures."[2]

† I forget what I said to give Francesca this impression; but I *do* like the Italian title, because young ladies may (as in this case) be countesses at three years old, but can't be marchionesses or duchesses without getting married,—which at once diminishes my interest in them.

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[1] [Miss Alexander's MS. "Legend of Santa Marina," with drawings of leaves and flowers, was presented by Ruskin to Newnham College, Cambridge. For the story of Santa Marina, see above, p. 305 *n.*]

[2] [See, in a later volume, Ruskin's letters (1885) to Miss Katie Macdonald, who founded this society.]

Santa Rosa

Quando la sua Madre le dava un pezzo di pane, lo spezzava sempre fuori di casa. Una volta il suo Padre e la sua Madre la seguitarono, e la trovarono con tanti uccelli selvatici che le erano volati addosso, e mangiavano il pane dalla sua mano.

Query time that her Mother gave her a piece of bread she used to run away out of the door with it. One day her Father and Mother followed her, and they saw that many wild birds lighted upon her, and ate the bread from her hand.

world, He said that it was a great pasture-field for all of us, and we were all to live on it. My poor mother always taught us that, but then she never did harm to any one; and indeed if people were bad to her, she always tried to do them all the good she could, because she said that was the way the Lord Jesus used to do when He was in the world. She used to tell us how one day He was walking in the country with the apostles, and they stopped at a house and asked a woman to give them something to eat. Now that woman had not a bit of bread in the house; it was baking day, and she had just made the loaves and set them to rise on a board. But she was a very good, polite woman, and she said: 'I am so sorry I have no bread, my loaves are just rising; but if you will have patience, and come in and sit down a little while, I will make a little cake for you.' So she brought an armful of sticks, and heated the oven in a hurry; and then she cut off a piece of the dough, and made a nice stiacciata (just as my mother used to do herself sometimes when we were hungry before the bread was baked, and *that* stiacciata was *so* good; and sometimes she used to scrape up all the bits of old dough that stuck to the sides of the chest, and soak them in water over night, and then work them up into little round cakes for us: they were rather sour, but we never minded). Well, as I was saying, the woman baked her thin cake with the oven half heated, and when she went to take it out, the oven was all full of bread—just as full as it would hold! But, the day after, they went to ask for some bread of another woman, who had plenty to eat in the house, and she refused them, and said she had nothing, and drove them away with a very bad manner. And St. Peter, poor man,—well, we are all of flesh and blood, and nobody likes to have people uncivil;—he lost his patience a little, and after a while he said, 'Lord, what are you going to do to that woman?', thinking that some great judgment would come upon her; but the Lord only said, 'Di bene in meglio' (Better and better). St. Peter was not just pleased, at first, for he did not think it was quite right,"—here Edwige screwed up her face into an expression of puzzled disgust, intended to signify the state of mind of the Apostle,—"but the Lord did it to show us what we ought to do, and my mother always told us to remember it; and *she* always remembered it, and never lost her patience with any one. And she always taught us to be polite to all the beggars who came to the house, because she said, we should remember that the Lord had once asked for bread, and been refused. And she said, if we had nothing to give we should say, 'May the Lord make you find it somewhere else!'"

I have been two days writing this scrawl (and I pity your eyes when you read it), and I have just as much left to say as if I had said nothing! But I must end now. I cannot tell you how anxiously I am waiting to hear something about the Cappella de' Schiavoni.[1] Love as ever from us both.

Your affectionate

SORELLA.

VENICE,
Di 13 *Giugno*, 1885.

[1] [The reference is presumably to the Italian translation (1885) of "The Shrine of the Slaves," originally published (1877) as the "First Supplement" to *St. Mark's Rest:* see Vol. XXIV. p. 198.]

VII. THE STORY OF THE BISHOP OF VERONA

Perhaps you have seen in the paper some notice of the saintly Bishop of Verona, Cardinal Canossa. They have just been celebrating his jubilee now, (but I do not know if the English papers tell about such things,) and our friend the Patriarch of Venice went on to assist, and there was grand festa in all the city. Marina can remember the Cardinal's father, a survivor of the Venetian Republic. He and an uncle of Marina's husband were the last two who wore the dress of old* Venetian noblemen, which to the end they never left off—a three-cornered hat, hair in a queue, sword, black silk stockings, silver shoe buckles, and—the especial mark of nobility—a white cloak lined with scarlet.† In this dress Marina can remember having seen the old gentleman, in her childhood, going about Verona in a carriage with four horses, and servants in gorgeous liveries—a thin, dried-up old man, *with legs like two sticks*, as she describes him; the especial object of her childish aversion. He was terribly proud, this old Marchese Canossa, and enormously rich; and there was a picture in his palace of a dog with a bone in his mouth, and an inscription to the effect that when the dog should have finished the bone the fortunes of Casa Canossa would come to an end. There was another great family in Verona then, named Carlotti; and they had a beautiful daughter, and she and Canossa's son loved each other, but secretly, waiting for a favourable time to declare their attachment to their respective families. When it happened that old Canossa's wife died; and very soon afterwards the old gentleman went to the house of his neighbour Carlotti, and proposed to marry his daughter. Carlotti, pleased to give her to the richest man in Verona, went to his daughter and said to her, "The Marchese Canossa has made me an offer of marriage for you; will you be contented to accept him?" And the poor girl, believing it to be the *young* Marchese, answered delighted, "*Contentissima, Signor Padre!*" Her father then ordered her to dress herself and prepare to receive her fidanzato. I leave you to imagine her state of mind when she discovered her mistake! She entreated, with tears, her father to save her; but he said that his *honour* was concerned; and—will you believe it?—both he and the old Canossa insisted on her keeping her promise, made under a mistake! Through a mistaken sense

* Not older than 1700; there were no three-cornered hats in Titian's time, still less hair in queues. See the next note.

† It was still black in Evelyn's time, though the women's dress had then become utterly fantastic and insolent; yet still, [1645,] "the married women go in black vailes. The nobility weare the same colour, but of fine cloth lin'd wth taffeta in summer, with fur of the bellies of squirrells in ye winter, which all put on at a certaine day girt with a girdle emboss'd with silver; the vest not much different from what our Bachelors of Arts weare in Oxford, and a hood of cloth made like a sack, cast over their left shoulder, and a round cloth black cap fring'd with wool which is not so comely; they also weare their collar open to show the diamond button of the stock of their shirt. I have never seene pearle for colour and bignesse comparable to what the ladys wear, most of the noble families being very rich in jewells, especially pearles, which are always left to the son or brother who is destined to marry, which the eldest seldome do. The Doge's vest is of crimson velvet, the Procurator's, etc., of damasc, very stately."

of duty,* which one must respect, she yielded; and having done so, made the best wife she could to her unworthy husband, whom she survived for many years, a sad, saintly, broken-hearted woman, avoiding company as far as possible, and devoting herself to pious and charitable works. Young Canossa, to save himself and her from a position which would have been intolerable, went to Rome and entered a convent. He led a saintly life, rose high in the Church, and finally was made cardinal; and she lived to see him come back to Verona as Bishop. She died nine or ten years ago, and he is very old. But it is growing dark, and I must write no more. Some day I will tell you more of Marina's stories. Good-bye for now. Love from Mammina and

Your affectionate
SORELLA.

VIII. LIETI ANDIAMO

To-day I have principally to tell you about my minister's "going home." His name was Rossetti,[1] and he was a cousin, I think, of that Mr. Rossetti whom you spoke about in one of your Oxford Lectures last year;[2] and he preached in a little Italian Protestant church, composed almost entirely of very poor people, where we have been now for a great many years. He was a powerful preacher, because he always spoke from experience, and a dear good Christian man, whom everybody loved in the church. He was the one who said those words that were such a comfort to mamma in her great affliction, and that she has quoted to me a hundred times since,—"There is no use in any one trying to obtain consolation for himself: consolation is the gift of God, and one must pray for it, as for any other blessing." She could not remember any more of the sermon, as she was in too great distress at the time to listen much to anything, but she says that those words have always stayed by her, and been a help to her more than she can say. For some time before his death he had been poorly, but had that wonderful peacefulness which I had seen in Ida,[3] and in some others whose time was near to go. I remember always the last time that he ever spoke to me. We were all coming out of church, when he passed near me, and seeing that he looked feeble I asked him how he was. He answered, with a bright happy smile, "Nel Signore si sta sempre bene." And then added, lifting his eyes and speaking as if to himself,

* The mind of the modern upper classes in city life may be broadly divided into that which has no sense of duty, and that which has a mistaken one. And the Laws of the Natural Heavens have no mercy on mistakes.[4] The poor mourning Bishop could not save the cloisters of Verona from being made stables for the Austrian cavalry;[5] the young Marchese Canossa, happy in love, would have done so—or died a knight's death.

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[1] [See above, pp. 228, 304.]
[2] [See *Art of England*, Lecture i. (1883): Vol. XXXIII.]
[3] [See above, pp. 29 *seq.*]
[4] [See the reference to *Fors* given above, p. 289 *n.*]
[5] [Compare Vol. X. p. 422.]

"Ed il bene cresce sempre." On that last Sunday that he was with us I noticed he looked very pale, and that his step was less firm than usual; his sermon was on the words, "In my Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you." (And it was a comfort to us, afterwards, to think that so much honour was laid upon him, that his parting words to us should have been those of our Lord to the disciples!) And he spoke as he had never spoken before in all the years that he had been with us: he spoke of our home on the other side, of the Church already assembled there and of its union with the Church on earth, as if he saw it all in a vision. We had never had the things of the other world brought home to us in such a way,—all the little congregation were in tears. As he ended his discourse, and we regained our breath, which had all gone away with listening, I could not help whispering to the woman next me what a wonderful discourse we had heard, and she and I both agreed that we had never heard him, nor any one else, speak in that way. He read the hymn, but nobody began to sing at first: (as I said, it is a very poor little church, and we had neither organ nor choir,) so after a minute he started the tune himself, and sang the whole hymn in a clear and beautiful voice, the people joining.

The last words of the hymn were:

"Alleluia! abbiam la grazia,
Alleluia! il Cielo abbiamo,
Alleluia! lieti andiamo,
A Dio padre del Signor."

And with those words his ministration in the church ended; he rose to pray, but though his lips moved we could hear no sound; he trembled, and fell back into his seat insensible. The people pressed about him; one ran for a doctor, another brought water from the well in the cortile to bathe his forehead, thinking that he had fainted. After a few minutes he opened his eyes, and seeing his poor wife bending over him in tears, he pressed her hand and tried to speak, but we could only distinguish the words, "Gesù, Signore!" Then he seemed to fall asleep, breathed for a little while, and then was gone. They laid him in the church just where he used to stand to preach to us, until he was carried to the Campo Santo; and all that night, and the next day, his wife sat there by his side, very gentle and resigned, but wanting to see his face as long as she could. When I went back on Monday to take my last leave of him, he was lying in the same dress which he had worn when he preached, and in which he was afterwards buried, and his face had no look of death in it, but only its usual peaceful expression. The different Church members were passing in and out, shedding many tears, but quiet ones: some of them had laid flowers about him. The very little children went up close to him, and seemed as if they did not want to leave him. And so that is all; but was there ever such a grand departure?

VII

GIANNINA SINGING

I. THE SORELLA AND I HAVE A DEBATE CONCERNING ENRICHETTA

FLORENCE, *January* 11*th*, 1884.

Now, to answer what you say about the novels,*—if I have given you the idea that Enrichetta is a "foolish friend" I have done wrong;—she is not foolish, excepting where her Church and her confessor come in; where they do, she appears to lay aside the reasoning faculty. In the affairs of this world she has much wisdom; she manages several large estates, and takes the best possible care of her contadini; and she is charitable and really pious, and has been the kindest of friends to me. People who know her have a sort of veneration for her, and go to her for advice and comfort in their troubles; but she would read any book that her confessor recommended, and believe anything that he said, and she is over-awed by certain grim old ladies of the aristocratic religious type. Not that she is that sort at all; she is as sweet and simple a creature as ever lived, and just admires the over-dressed stately Christians at a distance, while she goes about in a very plain gown, and has friendly gossip with her contadini, and tends their sick babies, and gives cakes and apples to the well ones, and feels as if the good Lord would take her to heaven some day, though she has no doubt that the ladies who go to church all the time in old lace and jewels will go in a long way before her. She has a very ordinary picture of the Madonna, to which she talks just as little girls talk to their dolls, and has often requested her to speak to me, and feels somewhat hurt and disappointed that she has never done so. But I shall not have to read any more novels to her, for she is better now,† and when she is, she prefers S. Francesco di Sales.

* Namely, that I thought Miss Alexander's time might be better spent than in reading novels to Enrichetta all day long.

† She was spared for three more years. See the passages relating to her, *ante*, pp. 290, 297–298.

II. THE SITTING FOR THE GESÙ BAMBINO

FLORENCE, *March 14th*, 1884.

Now I have many things that I want to say to you, and the first is something about myself, that I should be ashamed to tell to most people, because they would laugh at me; but I know that you will not laugh at me, but will understand the sort of comfort that I have had. When I wrote you my last letter, I was feeling sad and discouraged, as I think you saw, but you did not know all the reason. I had just heard that another of my little ones was very ill. You remember the Gesù Bambino in the picture where the Madonna is showing him to the gipsy; *—that is the portrait of little Cecchino, the child of a dear friend of mine, and named after my own dear father, and he is the one who was so very ill. The night after I sent my letter to you,[1] I had gone to sleep with a heavy heart, and I dreamed about my picture of Suora Marianna, which would not come right, and I had such a beautiful dream for I thought the little Gesù Bambino came down and stood for me to draw his face. And when I waked, all my confusion had gone away; and since that I have gone on with my work without any trouble, and do not think any more about who is going to see it, or anything else.

Afterwards, I knew that my dear little Cecchino had been taken away a few hours before my dream. I had fallen asleep as I was saying a prayer for him, and he did not need my prayers; but perhaps he may have thought I needed his. Who knows? I do not pretend to account for it, but I have told you all just as it happened.

III. THE SINGING SWALLOWS

April 3rd, 1884.

I have been working so hard to finish the Suora Marianna; and now at last, thank the Lord! she is on her way to you. It seemed as if she would never be done, and now that she is done, I am not very well suited † with her. I think she looked better before she was finished; however, such as she is, I send her to you.

Caro Fratello, those two last letters which you wrote to mamma made me very sad, because they made me understand much which I did not before: it seems to bring you so much nearer to me, now that I know of

* It is one of the twelve I gave to Oxford,[2] and certainly one of the loveliest of Francesca's ideals of the Christ-child. I had no idea that it was a portrait: but see the seventh article in this number.

† "Suited," for "pleased,"—meaning not so "fittingly pleased" as I thought to be; a pretty little Americanism.[3]

[1] [Apparently a letter not printed by Ruskin, giving the story of this good nun, Suora Marianna; a saying of hers is referred to, as already in Ruskin's knowledge, on the next page.]

[2] [Plate XV.: see above, p. 159.]

[3] [Ruskin's friendship with Miss Alexander had taught him tolerance, it seems, for some Americanisms; contrast *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 12 (Vol. XXVII. p. 216).]

the great shadow on your life. I will not write about it, for I do not think that such words as mine could be any comfort to you; but I could not help saying this much: you know that you said that I might speak to you as I did to my dear father, and you know that I could not have seen *him* in trouble and have said nothing. But I will say no more, for I know very well that there are troubles which only the dear Lord Himself, Who has suffered more than any of us, and understands all, can help us bear. (And, indeed, I think that is true of all sorts of trouble; I find even the little ones become unbearable, if I try to bear them *alone*.) Only think, was it not strange? just as I was writing those words, in a sadder spirit than I ever wrote to you before, I heard the happiest and most hopeful sound that I ever hear in the year,—the swallows come back to the cortile! There is one pair of swallows that have built under the roof for I do not know how many years, and when they come back in the spring, it is like the return of dear friends. They are the little singing swallows* that have to me the gayest note of any birds, and they could not help a little song of delight at seeing the old home again. I shall not hear them much more to-day. I know how they always behave the first day; they are tired, poor little things! (who knows how far they have been flying?) and they sit about on the window-frames, and comb their feathers, and rest. But never mind the swallows now, (only it was strange they should come just that minute;) there were two or three things in those letters of yours that gave me a great deal to think of. You say that you have not time for so many things that you want to do, and that you even find life too short. I am sorry that you feel so, because it must take away much of the comfort from your life; but . . . you remember what Suora Marianna said? "When the Lord gives us anything to do, He takes care of us while we are doing it." You will live until you have done all that He wants you to do for Him and His people, and then you will want to go to Him. Life and death belong to Him, and not to us. Do try and not think of these things; He never laid any such burden upon us.

IV. IDA'S ANNIVERSARY

FLORENCE, *January 22nd*, 1885.

MIO CARO FRATELLO,—I am all alone this morning, and so begin a letter to you which I shall hardly finish to-day, for it is the anniversary of the day when Ida left us.[1] Twelve years to-day! I can hardly make it seem real! And, before long, I know that her poor mother will be coming in for a long visit, with a little bunch of flowers to place under Ida's picture, and some boiled chestnuts in a teacup, for Edwige and me. That is her

* I looked through all the ornithologies in London to illustrate my lecture on the swallow,[2] and never found a word about this sort! But see the ninth article in this number.

[1] [See above, p. 36.]
[2] [Lecture ii. in *Love's Meinie* (Vol. XXV. pp. 45 *seq.*).]

way of celebrating the day. She is not so lonely now; she brings a little Ida with her, poor Giulia's child, who lives with her. She was not well in Rome after her mother died, and so her father sent her here to stay with her grandmother, to whom she is a great comfort. She is the dearest, brightest little thing that ever was, eight years old, with beautiful hair of a strange pale sort of blonde, that I never saw any other like, curling all about her forehead just as her poor mother's used to, and falling all over her shoulders; and, do you know, she loves me just as my own Ida did! When she comes to see me, she brings a little chair that I keep for little visitors, and comes and sits close by me, and if anything takes her to the other side of the room, she runs back as fast as she can and nestles down into her corner again.

. . . . . .

I was not able to go on with my letter yesterday, and I do not know when you will receive it, or when I shall have one from you, for the snow has stopped all the mails, and we have not had any foreign letter for several days. It is a long time since there has been such a winter as this; everything has been ready for several weeks to send to our friends at l'Abetone, and we cannot send, because the *procaccio* never comes now on account of the snow: it makes me shiver to think of those poor people, who must be half buried, and half frozen.

Ida's mother came yesterday, as I had expected, and I was troubled when I saw her, because her eyes were quite red and inflamed; but she accounted for it by saying that she had shed too many tears over the story of her daughter, which she keeps reading over and over again in the Italian translation. She has been especially touched and made happy by this money coming from Ida for the poor. "Only to think," she says, "that my Ida should be doing good in the world now, when she died so long ago!"

I gave Filomena, the servant, something for her old mother, who is a poor widow in the country, and had sent word to her daughter that she was short of firewood—which I am sorry that any one should be, in this weather; I gave Filomena ten francs for her, but she sent her only five, saving the other five to send after a week or two. I cannot quite understand whether she thinks that such great wealth, coming all at once, would tempt the old lady to extravagance, or whether she fears that it might place her in danger from robbers.

V. SANTA ROSA'S OLIVE-TREE

FLORENCE, *January 22nd*, 1885.

I am sorry that I cannot write you a more entertaining letter this week, but now my surroundings are not of the most enlivening, as nearly all the people I know, rich and poor, are ill with attacks on the chest, and the past two weeks have been anxious and sober ones to me; and if I should write you of the things which I have been mostly thinking and hearing about, I am sure that you would never want to see any more of my letters. All of the three very near friends whom I have in Florence, Enrichetta,

Angelina, and Letizia, are confined to the house by illness (and want us all the time in three places at once), and there has been dangerous illness in Edwige's family, and among my dear widows; but, thank the Lord, everybody seems to be recovering now, and I believe that your help and Ida's has saved some valuable lives. It seems hard, sometimes, to have to take the money that should belong all to the sick and helpless, to make up for other people's cheating: here I am obliged just now to help the family of a house-painter, a good workman and very honest man, because some ladies employed him to paint all their rooms in imitation of French wall-paper, and then told him politely that they would try to pay him some time or other! How *can* people do so? And he with four little children! And as he does not like to follow the example of his employer, and make debts that he cannot pay, the family have been in great straits; but thank Providence, there is enough for all! And the *Roadside Songs* keep having their practical results. A young English girl, whom I hardly know at all, came in yesterday and asked me if I did not want her to make up some clothes, offering also to provide the materials. She brought me also a very pretty—she called it pinafore, but it looked like a little dress, for Santa Rosa. But I must end this, or I shall be running off into some of the stories of sickness and poverty which are pretty much all that I hear at this moment, and you have no need of such stories as those. So I will leave you, and go to drawing the little olive-tree in the front of Santa Rosa's picture, which is to be my work to-day.

VI. MOONLIGHT IN VENICE

VENICE, *June 20th*, 1888.

Fratello, my letters grow more and more trivial, but somehow I think you like to hear all these little experiences of mine; and there is no use in my writing you about the great things in Venice, of which you have written yourself as no one will ever write again. I must say one word though about the mosaics in San Marco (not, however, regarding them artistically). The gondoliere's wife has asked leave to be present when Edwige and I have our daily reading: she is a bright woman, and it is very pleasant to see her interest;—also pleasant to hear Edwige's very simple and sensible explanations of such passages as she thinks her friend may not understand. But the best of all is, when we come to any subject represented in those mosaics, to see how Catina brightens up, how well she remembers it, and what a reality it immediately assumes to her. "St. Mark still preaches."[1] If you only knew how often I think of those words of yours!

. . . . . .

Edwige continues her profound astronomical researches. The other day as we were looking from the window, she said to me very solemnly, "The longer I live, the more I wonder at the greatness of the Almighty. Only to think that He has made the moon, and hung it *directly over Venice*, and yet it gives light in all the world."

[1] [The heading given by Ruskin to an earlier chapter: see above, p. 296.]

VII. THE WATCHER BY THE PENTOLA

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, *July 13th*, 1888.

To-day I will try to tell you all I can, about Suora Marianna and the Bambino. I have been trying to think if I can remember the composition well enough to draw it, but fear that I cannot; however, I will see to-morrow. The story was, as you may remember, of a good sister who spent her time in nursing the sick; and once, when she had been sitting up for several nights with a poor woman, and had gone into the kitchen to make some soup for her, she was so overcome with weariness that she fell asleep in the chimney corner. When she awaked, she saw the Gesù Bambino standing by her side, and watching the pentola[1] that it should not burn. My picture represented the monaca asleep, sitting on one of those benches which one often sees in the chimney in old-fashioned Italian houses; and the Bambino, a little child of two years or so, standing at her knee, with one hand extended over the pentola, in the position that I had seen in my dream. How pleased poor little Cecchino's father will be, to have that story printed![2] His dear mother, who was Giannina's sister, went to him three years ago. I sold that picture[3] before it was finished, and have never seen it since, and cannot remember it very distinctly. With love from us both,

Ever your affectionate

SORELLA.

VIII. RUNNING BROOKS

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, *August 9th*, 1888.

MIO CARO FRATELLO,—The little stories that you have chosen to print out of my letters are prettier than I ever thought they were; of course the one I cared most for was about my dear Enrichetta,[4]—it recalled her to me so plainly. Oh dear, I could afford to laugh at some little things about her then; and now, I would as soon laugh at any of the saints up there, where she is now! And as for the Madonna that she used to talk to, I only wish I could see even that poor picture again. It was in such a pretty little chapel at her country house at Viesca (where the nightingales were; I used to hear them singing outside, when I sat there), and it was so still, and the bees used to come humming in at the low window, and go to the flowers on the altar. And there was a book of prayers lying in the chair where she used to sit, all written out in her own hand.

If I had known that you wished to print Edwige's astronomical observations,[5] I would have sent you some more of them. The other evening I found her on the balcony, in devout contemplation of the stars. "There

[1] [For this word, see above, p. 172 *n.*]

[2] [The story in the letter of 1884, given above, p. 323.]

[3] [That is, a different picture, illustrating the story of Suora Marianna, from the one which had been sent to Ruskin in 1884 (see p. 323).]

[4] [See above, pp. 290, 321.]

[5] [See above, p. 325.]

is the star that was at Venice," she said, "and it always looks in the same place, no matter where we go! Do you know, where I lived when I was a little girl, there were no clocks nor watches; and people used to tell the time by the stars. My father used to; he could tell all the stars by name,—for they all have their names! and when he looked at them he knew just what hour of the night it was. There were certain stars that he called the Stelle Mercatanti, and when he had a journey to take, he used to watch for them. For my poor father used to take long journeys sometimes, when he had no work to do at home, and heard of some at a distance; and he always went on foot, not to spend. There were so many of us at home! I have known him walk as much as fifty miles, poor man; he was not afraid of fatigue. And in the summer time he used to set out some time before the day; and I remember how he used to watch from the window, and say, 'The Mercatanti are going down,—it is time to start.' But only to think of the wisdom of the Almighty, that He has even provided for people who have no watches! Our old people in the country had no learning such as is taught in schools; but they knew certain things, and what they did know, they knew right. People now-a-days would say that they were very unfortunate, to be without watches, but God thought even of *them!* He never forgets anything. And really they were better off, in a way, than people now, for the stars never get out of order, and watches do, very often!"

Now, Fratello, I have one thing to tell you that I know will please you, and that is, that my eyes have gained wonderfully, so that I am working nearly as well as ever, and they improve every day. Edwige went back to some of the old people's science, and recommended *running water,* which, she said, in her part of the country was considered a remedy for almost everything. "Only," she said, gravely, "you must have faith! It is necessary to have a little religion in everything." So now, whenever we walk in the country, I run down to every little stream that I see, and bathe my eyes in the icy-cold water; and whether it is faith or not, I do not know, but the improvement is very great.

We have had a great storm of wind here, that lasted three days; but it has blown away the clouds, and now the weather is lovely, and I hope the sun has come out in time to save the harvest, which was threatened by the continual rain. They say a fortnight's sunshine would save everything; and I can't bear to have these poor people lose what they have worked so hard for! But time and paper have come to an end together. Good-bye, and love from mamma, and the same always from

Your affectionate

SORELLA.

IX. THE GOLDEN ROBIN

MIO CARO FRATELLO,—I hoped to have written you a long letter this time, but as it is, I am afraid I shall have to content myself with only a few lines; for, if possible, I want this to arrive the *evening before* your birthday.[1] On the day itself you will have so many letters that I think

[1] [As Ruskin's birthday was on February 8, it would seem that the date "Gennaio" at the end of the letter was a slip of the pen.]

you will be quite tired with them all, and would rather have one less than one more; and I should like to have mine the last letter of the year that is going, to come when you are quiet and alone, only to tell you how I hope and pray that this year of your life may end, and the next begin, in all peace and blessedness. And I do thank the Lord with all my heart, that, after all the trouble and anxiety of last summer, the day finds you with restored health, and able once again to take comfort, and *give* comfort, in your work. And I hope the next year, and as many more as it may please Him to give you, may find you and leave you well and happy, at peace, and at work. That is the best I can wish for you; for I feel somehow that of all your earthly comforts, your work is the one that you would find it hardest to give up. One can understand it in such work as yours. But does it never seem strange to you how people come to enjoy *every* kind of work? There is Angelo Bernardi, Beatrice's son;[1] he is poor and works very hard, and most people would think it a sad fate for a poet (and he is a poet) to pass his life among stones and mortar. But what do you think he said to me once? "I never could have been anything but a builder, I had such a passion for building from the time I was a child. My family wanted me to stay on the farm, but I could not. Oh, but you cannot think what beautiful work it is. Nobody knows who has not tried! When the evening comes, I am always sorry, and do not want to stop; I always want to see how the wall will look when I have done a little more, and so I work on, quite into the darkness." All this, said with that peculiar *inspired* manner that he learnt, or inherited, from his wonderful mother. And, would you believe it? my poor Edwige speaks in just the same way about cleaning, and dusting, and going errands, and knitting stockings, and all the other occupations of *her* laborious life. The other day a friend was speaking of a poor man who had long been too ill to work; and Edwige, after expressing her deep compassion, said, devoutly and trustfully, raising her eyes to heaven: "I hope, when we are not able to work any more here, God will give us better work to do up there!"

I have been doing some work lately, a little out of my line; but then I only do it in odd minutes, and for rest;—arranging the pieces for a patchwork quilt. I should not speak about it to you, excepting for one very curious thing about it, which will probably not be new to you, though it is to me. Among the odds and ends which I have collected for my quilt, are a few poor little fragments, (only rags, for I try not to cut up anything large enough to be useful in any other way) of last century brocade. And there is just about twice as much substance, and twice as much silk, in them, as in the most beautiful bits of modern silks and velvets, which some of my friends have given me; and I have to bear on a great deal harder with the scissors to cut through them. And I wonder what the reason is, for it sets me thinking of what I have often observed, —how old dresses last, when new ones wear out; and old walls stand, when new ones crumble; and old furniture looks better and brighter with age, when the new cracks and comes to pieces:—it seems to run into everything!

Now as to my *real* work. I have a great deal to do just now; and

[1] [For further account of him, see *Roadside Songs;* above, p. 212.]

the lady of whom I wrote you in my last letter* has been back, and brought a beautiful girl with her, whom I suppose to be Maggie, but she only introduced her as "My daughter" (which is an uncomfortable habit that most of my visitors have), and I am to draw her likeness next week. But meanwhile, I do not know the name of either of them, which is awkward; and have to call the lady "Madam," and the girl "My dear." Maggie is about sixteen, dark-eyed, curly-haired, fresh-coloured, with perfect features; and as wild as a hawk, as American girls are apt to be at that age, with more energy and spirits than she knows what to do with. Her mother says no one has ever been able to take her likeness; so that I am a little dismayed, more particularly as she appears quite incapable of keeping still for two minutes together: but at least I shall enjoy having that lovely face to study.

Also I am drawing a cluster of snowdrops, to have them ready in case Mrs. Swayne and I should combine about the flowers she wants for her book, for the snowdrops will soon be gone.

I have just been looking at the letter which Mammina has been writing to my dear Cugina,† and see that she has forgotten to answer her about the American robins. They have a bright red breast, and their wings are dark and glossy, like those of a swallow, and they are of a very beautiful form. They come home to New England in the early spring, and their sweet whistle seems to give us the feeling of spring more than any other sound. On Boston Common there are *hundreds* of them, in the middle of the city, building their nests in the great elm-trees, the delight of the city children. They are gentle creatures, almost as gentle as the doves at Venice. I have known one stand in the long grass, and *answer when spoken to* as caged birds sometimes do. In the country they love especially to build in apple orchards; and I never saw anything prettier than their nests, woven of grass and moss and horse-hair, with four or five eggs, of the most heavenly shade of blue, like nothing else, (unless indeed a turquoise may have that shade, now and then, but it is not common).‡ Nobody, at least nobody with any shade of self-respect or morality, ever kills or disturbs them; they are considered almost sacred. Do please give my love to Joanie, and show her this account, since she cared to know about them. But the Golden robin, of which I wrote you before, *weaves* its nest instead of building it, of a sort of strong, perfectly flexible cloth, into which it will work almost any kind of material. And I should like to see any one try to tear it! My old brocades are nothing to it. And how do you suppose it can weave, with no other implements than its little beak and claws? And how can it tie its soft little bag of a nest on to a very slender branch, where it hangs rocking all day in the wind, so tightly that it *never* falls, unless the branch falls with it? And what is the use of trying to understand anything? "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me!"

* Passage not yet given.[1]
† Cousin, Joan.
‡ No. A turquoise is quite cold and earthy in comparison.

[1] [And so never given, as this was the last Part of *Christ's Folk.*]

But I must finish this long rambling letter, so good-bye for now. And among all the thousands of prayers that will go up for you to-night and to-morrow, there will be none more sincere and earnest, though there may be many more worthy, than those of

Your affectionate
SORELLA.

Di 4 Gennaio, 1886.

Here is a rispetto that has been running in my head all day; the translation is poor, but the original so pretty, that I must send it to you; it is about the spring, when the men come home from the Maremma:[1]—

"È ritornato il fior di primavera,
È ritornato la verdura al prato;
È ritornato chi prima non c' era,
È ritornato il mio innamorato.

L' è ritornato la pianta col frutto;
Quando c' è il vostro cuor, il mio c' è tutto.
L' è ritornato il frutto * colla rosa;
Quando c' è il vostro cuor, il mio riposa."

"The flower of spring has come to earth once more,
Grass to the field, and blossoms to the tree;
And he has come who was not here before,
The spring has brought my love again to me.

The plants are green, the trees with blossom shine;
And where your heart is, there is all of mine.
And on the brier has blossomed out the rose;
And where your heart is, there can mine repose."

X. GIANNINA SINGING TO BEATRICE

MIO CARO FRATELLO,—I am not sure that you know who Giannina Milli[2] is: if you were an Italian you *would* know, but she has never left her own country, and none of her poetry has ever been translated into any foreign language, so far as I know. But she is the greatest improvisatrice in Italy: she is an Abruzzese from Teramo, one of my oldest and dearest friends. I was very young when I first knew her, she a little older in years, *much* older in character and experience, and has taken the place to

* In the language of the mountain people "frutto" means any kind of tree.

[1] [See above, p. 141 *n*. The rispetto is No. 707 in Tigri's collection.]

[2] [Of Giannina Milli, a notice will be found in Tigri's *Canti Popolari Toscani*, 3rd ed. 1869, p. lxxi. See also *Poesie Improvvisate da Giannina Milli la sera del XV. Marzo MDCCCLXVII. nel Teatro Gallo a S. Benedetto*, Venezia, 1867 (with a preface by Dott. Vincenzo Mikelli); and similar pamphlets have been issued in many other towns on like occasions. Her poetry was also published in 2 vols. at Florence, 1862–1863.]

me ever since of elder sister and adviser. Her parents were poor people, and simple; but both, the mother especially, very far from *common*, in either character or intellect. And there were *twelve children;* six of them died, though, in childhood or early youth. I remember the dear old lady (who loved me as a daughter of her own) used to say, "The Lord was very good to *go halves* with me: such beautiful children: no wonder He wanted half for Himself!" And my poor Giannina, the eldest daughter, had to come to the front very early. I have heard that she was only fifteen (but then an Abruzzese at fifteen is as old as an English girl of twenty) when her mother, knowing her great talent, and having no other means to meet the necessities of the family, first took her to improvise in public. Her success was a perfect *furore;* from that time want visited the family no more, and her destiny was fixed. It was not a happy destiny. She was of a retiring nature, very sensitive, and without the least taste for fame or admiration; her only wish in life would have been to live quietly in some country place, with her books and her work, and never be heard of. Instead of that, she has been one of the great celebrities of Italy, one whom all the Italians are proud of as an honour to their country; travelling from place to place, receiving presents from various municipalities, having medals struck in her honour, her friendship sought for by the greatest. The Queen Margherita is among her friends, and all the most learned and distinguished people in the country. Finally, when Garibaldi was dictator of Naples, he did one of the best things that ever he did, and almost turned me into a *Garibaldina,* by giving a pension to Giannina, which the Italian government afterwards continued; so, as her family were all grown up and provided for (her brothers and sisters, I mean), she very thankfully retired out of the world which she had never loved; and now, for many years, she has been heard of no more, outside of the circle of her near friends and relations. Perhaps *because* she never loved the world, the world never hurt her: an Italian writer of the "advanced" school once called her "La Poetessa del cuor semplice," and no words could describe her better. Once—a great many years ago now—Giannina was staying at S. Marcello with her mother and younger sister, and she wrote me word that they were coming to pass a day at l'Abetone, and she should like to meet Beatrice,[1] whom she had long wished to see. They had exchanged letters, already, in verse; I wrote Beatrice's from her dictation, and read her Giannina's when it arrived; and very remarkable letters they were on both sides. So a little boy was despatched over the mountains to the Valley of the Sestaione with a message, and on the appointed day Beatrice did not fail to come, in the black dress and embroidered white veil, apron, and handkerchief in which she was married. There was quite a party came that day from S. Marcello, and they were all interesting people, and I should like to tell you about them all if I could. There was the ex-Minister Scialoia, with his wife (and some day I must write you what she did for him when he was in prison under old King Ferdinando), and their son, and two daughters. But I must hurry on. Giannina was a very beautiful woman then, in her way—a peculiar way certainly. Very small, but of perfect form, so that in a

[1] [Another famous improvisatrice: see above, pp. 57, 208.]

photograph she gives you the impression always of being twice as large as she is; the smallest and prettiest hands and feet that ever I saw; a delicate, oval face, dark, with crimson cheeks; blue-black hair, so much that it could hardly be disposed of, but dressed perfectly plainly, smooth and shining like black satin. But one did not see all this at first. If you had seen Giannina for the first time you would have seen nothing but her eyes; they were dark eyes, very deep, and far-seeing, and somewhat sad in repose, but flashing into smiles and brilliancy when she spoke. I shall never forget how, when they met that day, the elder and happier poetess took the younger and more heavily burdened one in her arms, and kissed her on both cheeks, saying: "We ought to love each other, for we are sisters." Then Beatrice began to sing, in her peculiar chant, praying Giannina to answer her; and she sang ottava after ottava, until, to our dismay, Giannina rose, her face kindling, and prepared to improvise a sonnet herself. To our dismay, for you must know that Giannina's improvising is not like that of any one else. She throws herself, by some power which we cannot comprehend, into a state something like possession, if there were such a thing as being possessed by a good spirit instead of an evil one, and words come to her that do not seem to be her own. She cannot explain it herself, so as to make us understand it; but she always suffers for it afterwards. It was an opportunity not to be lost to hear Giannina; and we hastily called in the few country people who had gathered under the window to hear Beatrice's singing, that as many as possible might enjoy it. But I cannot remember what her sonnet was; people said that it was very wonderful, I am afraid I hardly heard it. All that I can remember is a strange, painful feeling, as if my dear friend had changed into some beautiful, terribly beautiful supernatural creature, so were her face and voice changed. After a little she sat down, trembling, flushed, and tearful, and I had my Giannina back again. And there was more singing from Beatrice. I remember she sang an ottava separately to each person present, and one was particularly touching and beautiful. It was addressed to her old friend Betta Ferrari, and recalled their youth when they had been together at Melo, and their long lives afterwards apart but in constant friendship, and their hope of a happy ending to their long journey, and a resting-place together in the better country.

But, Fratello mio, I must not write any more now. Here I am at the end of my paper, and I wanted to tell you about our walk in the fir-woods all together, and our dinner at the table covered with wild flowers, and a great deal more. And besides many things have happened this week that I meant to tell you, and I think my next letter will be a long one. I hope I shall have more light to write it by. This has been written in the clouds, which have lighted down about us as they often do here. (I wonder if you ever had a letter from the clouds before?) And I have made all sorts of mistakes, and began both sheets on the wrong side of the paper, and I do not know where my wits have been, but I hope you will have patience. Love always from Mammina and

Your affectionate
SORELLA.

ALL' ABETONE,
June 30th, 1886.

I find one more rispetto among the Sorella's gleanings, this last Eastertide, which might well be sung by Beatrice in heaven, caring yet for the spring flowers of earth.

"O Rosellino! Fior di Rosellino!
Da mi licenza, se pensi di lasciarmi;
Ti presi ad amar quand' eri piccolino;
L' amor che t'ho portato i mesi, e gli anni!
L' amor che t'ho portato i mesi e l'ore!
O Rosellino, rendimi il mio cuore!"

"Oh Rosellino, blossom of the spring!
At least, if thou wilt leave me, set me free;
I loved thee, when thou wast a little thing;
The months and years I've past in loving thee!
The months and hours! And now, do we thus part?
Oh Rosellino, give me back my heart!"

And here is one more, which must have the last page* to itself, for all of us beyond the mountains to translate in our own way, and into the words of our own lands.

RISPETTO

"E L'ALTRA sera, al tramontar del sole
Pensavo a te, ch' eri lontano tanto!
E mi parea udir le tue parole,
Ma eran dolorose come pianto!
E sospirar sentia sommessamente,
E afflitta in volto mi parea la gente.
Ah, l'ora del tramonto è un ora mesta!
Di te, mio caro ben, che cosa è questa?
Ah, l'ora del tramonto è una mest' ora.
E tu, caro ben mio, non torni ancora!"

* The reader must forgive me the index,[1] for the sake of these two rispetti.

[1] [That is, the "Nominal Index," which Ruskin had issued with each of the four Parts, preceding the final number: see the Bibliographical Note, p. 253.]

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[1] [For particulars of this Index, see p. 254. In ed. 1 there was a separate "Nominal Index" to each of the Parts, iii.–vi. Each Index contained the following words at the head of it:—

"(The names given alphabetically in this Index will usually be the Christian ones simply, surnames and distinctive titles taking their chance afterwards.)"

Places, as well as persons, etc., are now included. The references to *Fors* are to the story of "The Mother of the Orphans," which was repeated by Ruskin in *Christ's Folk*.]

[2] [See also *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iii. § 29 *n.* (Vol. XXXIII.).]

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[1] [See also *Art of England*, § 211 (Vol. XXXIII.).]

IV

ULRIC THE FARM SERVANT

(1886–1888)

ULRIC THE FARM SERVANT.

A STORY OF THE BERNESE LOWLAND.

BY

JEREMIAS GOTTHELF.

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH FROM THE ORIGINAL GERMAN

BY

JULIA FIRTH.

REVISED AND EDITED, WITH NOTES,

BY

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GEORGE ALLEN,
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.
1888.

[*Bibliographical Note.*—Of this work there has hitherto been only one edition. It was issued in nine Parts, the title-page for the completed work (issued with Part IX.) being as here given (p. 339). Each Part was furnished with a separate title-page; that for Part I. was precisely similar to the general one, except for the date "1886" instead of "1888"; the other title-pages had the number of the Part below the author's description.

Each Part was issued in pale buff-coloured paper wrappers, with the title-page (enclosed in a double-ruled frame) repeated upon the front,[1] with the addition of the rose-device. The Parts were published at the price of One Shilling each; and of each 1000 copies were printed.

The Parts were issued, octavo, on the following dates and with the following contents:—

Part I. (July 1886).—This contained title-page (with imprint at foot of the reverse—"Printed by Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ld., London and Aylesbury"), pp. i., ii. Preface, pp. iii.–vii.; p. viii., blank. "Part I. Chapters i.–iv.," "Part II. Chapter i.," and the beginning of "Chapter ii.," pp. 1–48.

Part II. (July 1886).—Title-page and imprint, as before. Remainder of Chapter ii., Chapters iii. and iv., and part of Chapter v., pp. 49–96.

Part III. (September 1886).—Title-page and imprint as before. Remainder of Chapter v., Chapters vi. and vii., pp. 97–142.

Part IV. (November 1886).—Title-page and imprint as before. Chapters viii.–xi., pp. 143–190.

Part V. (March 1887).—Title-page (1887) and imprint as before. Chapters xii., xiii., and xiv., pp. 191–238.

Part VI. (June 1887).—Title-page and imprint as before. Chapters xv., xvi., and xvii., pp. 239–284.

Part VII. (October 1888).—Title-page (1888) and imprint as before. Chapters xviii., xix., and xx., pp. 285–332.

Part VIII. (October 1888).—Title-page and imprint as before. Chapters xxi. and xxii., pp. 333–380.

Part IX. (October 1888).—Title-page and imprint as before. Chapters xxiii. and xxiv., pp. 381–428; the imprint repeated at the foot of the last page.

[1] In the case of the first Part, "Part I." was on the wrapper, though not on the title-page.

With Part IX. was issued the title-page for the complete book, and list of "Contents," pp. ix., x.

The complete book was issued in cloth boards, lettered across the back "Ulric | the Farm | Servant." Price 10s. Reduced to 7s.

In the present edition, the following alterations have been made:—

"Part I." at the head of "Chapter I.," and "Part II." at the head of the present Chapter v. have been removed, and the chapters are now numbered consecutively throughout. There is no break in the original at the end of Chapter iv.; and if Ruskin had any intention of dividing the story into Parts (as distinct from the "Parts," or instalments, in which he published the translation), he soon abandoned it.

References have been added to the quotations at the head of the chapter.

All the footnotes in ed. 1 were Ruskin's. The indication "J. R." which was sometimes added has therefore been omitted, as likely to cause confusion.

A few misprints, etc., have been corrected. For instance, in ch. v. (and elsewhere), "Bodenbauer" is a correction of "Bodenbaur"; ch. vi. (and elsewhere), "Bronzwyl" for "Bronzwyll."

Ruskin's note at the end of Chapter xxiv. has been revised in accordance with his marks in a copy in Mr. Wedderburn's possession. The revisions (other than a few alterations of punctuation) are as follow:—

Lines 39, 40, "the gift of" inserted before "their affections," and "their feelings" substituted for "feeling."

Line 41, "possess and" omitted before "conquer."

Line 42, "alike" transposed from the beginning of the sentence.

Line 48, "the" omitted before "passion."

Line 55, "but that" inserted for "his perfect shepherdess."

Line 58, "cottage" corrected to "cottager."

Line 61, "that they are so" substituted for "it."

The last lines formerly stood: ". . . usually anticipates it; but never conquers their own character, or for an instant shakes their purposes. We will take up the question again after we have seen . . ."

The author's footnote about chess is added.]

PREFACE[1]

HAVING been enabled to lay before the English reader, in Miss Alexander's *Songs of Tuscany*, the truth of Italian peasant character animated by sincere Catholic religion, I find it my next most instant duty to place in parallel light the more calculating and prosperous virtue of Protestant Switzerland. This I am enabled to do merely by translating the story by Jeremias Gotthelf, called *Ulric the Farm Servant*,—which, if the reception granted it encourage me, will be followed, as in the original work, by its continuous history of *Ulric the Farmer*.

I hoped to have translated at least one of these tales myself; but I only know the French translation, and have therefore accepted the gladly given help of a very dear friend and active member of St. George's Guild,[2] Mrs. Firth, of Seathwaite Rayne, Ambleside. She has translated the whole book from the original German, adopting sometimes the terms of phrase which seemed more graceful or expressive from the French; and I have myself revised the whole, indulging my own preference for the French words or

[1] [The following was Ruskin's first draft of the Preface (in Mrs. Firth's possession):—

"The following excellent translation of Gotthelf's pleasantest novel has been made partly at my request, partly for her own pleasure and that of the peasant boys and girls who trust her for their evenings' reading, by one of the ablest and kindest of my women-friends. I was very jealous of letting her do it,—much wanting instead to do it all myself. But, years went by, and it was time it should be done,—and, besides, Mrs. Firth knew German, while all my acquaintance with the book was through the French translation. Jealously revising, and insisting sometimes on my Frankish, instead of Mrs. Firth's Allemannic view of a sentence, I rejoice finally in placing the precious book, with satisfaction to both our consciences, before the English reader,—to whose patience and best judgment I recommend it fearlessly, as one that will singularly reward attention to its quiet detail of daily life in a——"

Here the first draft broke off.]

[2] [For a reference to Mrs. Firth in this connexion, see Vol. XXVIII. p. 709.]

idioms where it seemed to me the German was cumbrous.* Of Gotthelf's work and life, a succinct and sensible account will be found in Max Buchon's preface to the French edition of *The Joys and Sorrows of a Schoolmaster;*[1] it is only necessary for the reader of this book to know that his real name was Albert Bitzius;—that he was an entirely benevolent and sincere German-Protestant clergyman, vicar of the little Bernese village of Herzogen-Buch-See,[2] six leagues north of Berne; and that in character he was a combination of Scott and Sydney Smith, having the penetrative and imaginative faculty of the one, with the practical common sense of the other. He cultivated his own farm so as to gain the respect and sympathy of his farmer

* My reasons for following Max Buchon's text in the main passages, will be understood at once, on reading the following note to me from Carlyle's niece, Miss Aitken, written nine years ago, when first I tried to bring Uli before the English reader.

"5, Great Cheyne Row, Chelsea, S.W.,
"*June* 6, 1876.

"Dear Mr. Ruskin,—I take the liberty of sending with this a note that has come to-night from Lady Lothian, who, as you will see, is anxious to have a nomination to the Blue Coat School, for a boy she is interested in. I do not know whether the lady is right in supposing that you have the power of nomination,[3] but if you had and were willing to give the required promise for next year, you would be doing a kindness to one of the hardest-working and most self-denying people in the world.

"I hardly know how to put into words the awful fact I have to communicate. I have failed utterly and ignominiously in my attempt to translate Uli into English. I have tried over and over again and can't get on at all. It is written in cramped, foreign German,[4] largely interspersed with Swiss words, which no dictionary will explain. My uncle has goaded me on with cruel jibes; but he read the book himself, and says now that *he* could at no period of his life have translated it. I need say no more, except that I am much grieved to find what would have been a great pleasure to me so far beyond my very small powers.

"You will be sorry to know that my uncle has been very weak and poorly of late weeks. He is, however, getting a little better as the weather improves.

"He sends his kindest and best love to you; and I am ever, dear Mr. Ruskin,
"Yours affectionately and respectfully,
"Mary Carlyle Aitken."

---

[1] [*Jérémias Gotthelf. Œuvres Choisies traduites avec une notice biographique par Max Buchon. Tome Premier: Les Joies et les Souffrances d'un Maitre d'École.* Neuchatel, 1859.]

[2] [For five years only; his longer cure was at Lutzelflüh in the Emmenthal: see the Introduction, above, p. xxxiv.]

[3] [See *Time and Tide*, § 119 (Vol. XVII. p. 418).]

[4] ["This must have been a dialect edition; the one I used was in ordinary German, with occasional patois."—*Translator's Note* (1907).]

parishioners,—fulfilled his pastoral duties with benevolent cheerfulness,—and wrote, in the quiet mornings of his well-husbanded and well-spent days, a series of stories of Swiss life, each beautifully, and with the subtlest literary art, led to its crisis through chains of modest and natural event; and in its course giving portraiture, exquisite in its sympathy, lovely in its delicacy, merciless in its veracity, of all that is best—and as much as it is needful to dwell on, of the worst—of the Swiss character in the phase of change during which it came under his observation, when the noble customs of the past were still observed by the peasants of ancient and honourable family, while the recent influences of trade and foreign travellers were gradually corrupting alike the lower peasantry and the city population. As studies of general human character, I know nothing but Scott's soundest work which can compare with these books; nor I believe will any sensible reader find the details which give them local vivacity and precision other than interesting, if he will not read too much at a time. Partly to assist him in that wholesome economy of his attention, and partly because I want to get some of the book quickly into his hands for the sake of the immediate comparison of the Swiss with the Italian character, and of the Protestant with the Catholic faith, I publish this translation in parts, like most of my own books. Twelve parts, containing about forty-eight pages each, and published monthly, price one shilling, will contain the first story, *Ulric the Farm Servant*. The little quotations at the heads of the chapters have been chosen by Mrs. Firth from my own books, and appear to me by no means the least valuable part of the volume!

J. Ruskin.

Brantwood, *30th June*, 1885.

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[1] [At the end of this chapter are some pages of comment by Ruskin, pp. 490–492.]

ULRIC THE FARM SERVANT

CHAPTER I

A MASTER AWAKES

"Those who are superior by forethought and industry, have for their function to be the providences of the foolish, the weak, and the idle."—*Time and Tide*, § 138.

The night was dark; still darker the place where a softly-restrained voice called repeatedly, "John." The voice came out of the large bed which almost filled up a little chamber in a great farm-house. The farmer's wife repeated, John! wake up, until he began to rub his eyes and ask what was the matter. You must get up, said she, and look after the cattle; it has struck half-past four, and Ulric only came in at two o'clock, quite tipsy. I thought you would wake, he made such a clatter tumbling on the stairs. Even if he is able to get up, it would not be safe to let him take a candle into the stable.

Servants are a mere nuisance now-a-days, muttered the farmer, while he got a light and dressed himself. They are hard to find, and their wages never satisfy them; one has to do the work oneself, without venturing to find fault. A man cannot be master without bringing the house about his ears.

But you cannot let things go on in this way, said his wife. Ulric's offences are too frequent, and he has drawn all his wages in advance. I am not thinking of you only but Ulric also. If he is not reproved, he will go from bad to worse. We must make it a matter of conscience, for whatever people may say about the new fashion, masters are still masters. It is vain to say that if the servants do their work, the masters have no further concern with them; they are responsible before God and man for what they permit, and for what they put up with. I think also about the example to the children. You must take Ulric into the stübli,* after breakfast, and give him a talking to.

The peasants of Berne have a remarkable dignity of conduct and manner, and this is especially to be observed amongst the peasant aristocracy who have occupied the same farms from generation to generation, and who have family traditions, and a regard for family honour. They have the beautiful habit of avoiding all signs of strife and contention which

* The master's room and bureau. See Glossary.[1]

[1] [Compare below, p. 357. No Glossary, however, was given.]

can draw upon them the observation of their neighbours. The houses stand alone, surrounded by trees, and pervaded by an atmosphere of dignified calm; their inhabitants move about with measured demeanour, the neighing of the horses is heard, but no angry nor reproachful voices sound beyond the peaceful enclosure. Husbands and wives never differ before other people; they are often silent as to the faults of the servants, or give only a passing word or intimation to the one concerned. In special and serious cases, the master, after well considering what he has to say, calls the offender very quietly into the stübli, or seeks him in his solitary work. He speaks to him calmly in a right fatherly manner, showing him his fault in its true light, and setting its consequences fully before him, at the same time doing full justice to the offender. When the master has done this, he is satisfied; there is no excitement nor resentment in his manner, no change in his ordinary behaviour to the servant whom he has reprimanded. These private reproofs have generally a good effect, because they are given in a fatherly way, and because self-respect is preserved. It would be difficult to give a just idea of the self-control and composed calm which pervade such households.

When Ulric's work was nearly finished, he appeared in the stable; he said nothing, and his master did not speak to him. When they were called to breakfast, the Paysan* went immediately to the fountain to wash his hands before entering, but Ulric delayed outside the house. Perhaps he would not have gone to breakfast at all, if the mistress had not herself called him by name.

He was ashamed to show his face, which was black and blue with the bruises of the preceding night. He had not yet learned that it is better to consider beforehand the consequences of an action, than to have to blush for it afterwards.

At table there was no reference to what had passed; even the maid-servants did not venture to exchange mocking smiles, because the master and mistress were serious. When they had done eating, the maids carried away the dishes, and Ulric, who had finished last, raised his elbows from the table, put on his hat, said grace, and was going out. Then the master said, Come here a minute, Ulric, I want to speak to you, led the way into the stübli, and shut the door; he settled himself at the head of the little table. Ulric remained standing near the door, and looked sheepish,—ready to be defiant or repentant, as the case might be.

Ulric was a fine, strong, and handsome young fellow, not yet twenty years of age, but there was something in his countenance which did not indicate great innocence or moderation, and which would soon make him look ten years older.

Listen, Ulric, began the master, things must not go on in this way any

* Henceforward I may often frankly use this word, being untranslatable into English, for the Master,[1] and "Paysanne" for the Mistress, of an hereditary estate, cultivated by the family to which it belongs, and by servants who live in the house or attached offices, and eat in the hall with the family.

[1] [So in the translation of "The Broom Merchant" in *Fors Clavigera;* see Letter 30 (Vol. XXVII. p. 552 *n.*).]

longer. I cannot allow you to be drunken and disorderly. I will not trust my horses and cows to a man who has his head full of brandy. It is not safe to let you go into the stable with a lantern, especially as you are continually smoking; too many houses have been set fire to in this way. I really do not know what you are thinking of, and what you imagine this will lead to.

Ulric replied that he had not set fire to anything, that he had always done his work; no one had to make him do it, and no one had to pay for what he drank, so it did not concern any one.

But it concerns me, answered the master; it is *my* servant who drinks away his money, and every one will wonder that Farmer Boden allows him to do so. It is true that you have not set fire to the house yet; but would not once be too often? would you ever have a happy hour if you did so, and if the children could not be saved, and were burned to death? And as to the work. *How* do you do it? I would rather you lay in bed all the day; instead of milking, you drop asleep under the cows; you see and hear nothing, and it is a misery only to look at you stumbling about. You gape and stare so that one sees plainly you have no mind for what ought to occupy you, but only for the girls of ill repute with whom you spend your time.

Ulric said he did not spend his time with girls of ill repute, and if he did not work enough to give satisfaction, he would go. He added that there was no sense in being worked to death for masters, who were never satisfied, do what you would; one was worse than another, they grudged wages, and gave bad food; the servants would soon have to catch grasshoppers and cockchafers when they wanted meat.

Now, Ulric, said the master, we will not talk so with each other. You are still in a passion, and it will be best for me not to speak to you just now. But I am really sorry about you. You might be a fine, industrious fellow. Some time ago I thought there was much good in you, and I rejoiced in it. But you are quite changed since you began drinking and staying out at night. You take no pains with anything, you have no goodwill, you sulk sometimes for a week together. Mark my words, if you go on in this bad way you will come to a bad end. And do not imagine that I do not know of your visits to Anna-Lisi, the most dangerous girl about. With the life she leads, you are just the one she wants to keep in hand, so that, at any time it suits her, she can force you to marry her. How would that please you? and tell me, are you not afraid to put your head into the noose like so many others, who by taking the road you are taking, have fallen into depths of misery? Even in good times, when work is plentiful and prices are low, a man who is fit for nothing, and whose money is always too little for him, must either beg, or go into debt, or suffer hunger; "the dear time" always lasts for him, from year to year, for ever. Now consider about it, and if you will not alter, then go in God's name, I do not wish to keep you longer. Give me your decision in a week.

Ulric muttered that he did not want a week, he had considered already; but the master did not seem to hear him.

Well! how did he take it? asked the wife of her husband as he came out of the parlour.

I have not been able to do much with him, answered the Paysan. He has been on his high horse, and it might have been better if I had waited until he had slept off his liquor. However, I have given him time for consideration, and I must now await the result.

Ulric went away fiercely angry, as if the greatest injustice had been done to him; he dashed his tools about, and vented his ill-humour upon the cattle; the noise disturbed the master very much, but he restrained himself, only saying once, Gently, gently. Ulric had no conversation with his fellow servants; as the reproof had not been given before them, he need not let them know anything about it. But he looked crossly at them, and considered them as his enemies, and on the master's side. The consequence was that no one encouraged or set him up, and he had no opportunity of talking out his ill-humour and vowing that he would not stay in such a place an hour after his time was up.

Gradually the fumes of wine passed off, and his excitement gave place to an insupportable lassitude, which was soon followed by depression of spirits. As every movement is a painful effort to a weary body, so the weary soul is unable to rise, and oppressed by gloom and heaviness. It is cast down by what it formerly rejoiced in, and what seemed to it the most attractive, is now a source of disgust and weariness.

While Ulric was under the influence of wine, he was angry with his master; when this had passed away, he was angry with himself. He was no longer irritated at being reproached for his ill-doing, but he began to consider how he had been led into it. He had a painful recollection of the twenty-three batzen which he had made away with in one evening, and which he must work fifteen days to regain. He was vexed with the wine he had drunk,—with the innkeeper who had served it to him,—with everything which had contributed to his intemperance of the preceding night. When he thought of what the farmer had said of Anna-Lisi Gnagli, an anguish seized him which brought a cold sweat to his brow. Good heavens! how could he marry her? His purse was empty, he had only three good shirts and four bad ones, he owed money to the tailor and to the merchant for his last suit of clothes. Who would pay the wedding expenses? Who would provide for the setting-up of housekeeping? And how could he keep a wife and children when he was in debt as a single man? These ideas troubled the poor Ulric so much that if a woman's figure appeared in the distance, he ran to hide himself in the stable; he saw Anna-Lisi behind every kerchief, and if any one knocked at the door he trembled like an aspen leaf. Thus pre-occupied, he seemed to have lost all sense, he forgot what he had to do, and made all kinds of mistakes; he was ill at ease and discontented with himself, therefore he was discontented with everybody else: he gave no one a good word, and nothing pleased him. The mistress cooked badly on purpose, and chose everything that he disliked; the master troubled him with unnecessary work, the horses seemed all to have the staggers, and the cows gave him as much trouble as they could. They were the most stupid cows that ate grass on God's earth.

If Ulric had not been withheld by the want of money and the dread of meeting Anna-Lisi, he would have had recourse to wine to drown his ill-humour, regret, and vexation, but he stayed in, and showed himself as

little as possible. It may seem surprising that his love had disappeared so quickly, but it had not been by any means a question of love. He had allowed himself to be led astray by custom and opportunity, by boastfulness and the false ideas of importance which are the ruin of many young peasants. Their compliance is attended by no sting of conscience, until they see the abyss of grief, misery, and despair into which they have well-nigh fallen.

The master and mistress behaved as if they perceived nothing, although she said several times she had never seen Ulric so morose: had not John spoken too sharply to him? He replied that he did not think he had. Ulric was not more vexed with him than with every one else, and he believed he was chiefly vexed with himself. He would speak to him again on Sunday, there must be a decision one way or other. His wife urged him not to be too hard, they knew Ulric, and they might easily get a worse lad in his place.

CHAPTER II

A CHEERFUL SUNDAY AT A PLEASANT FARMHOUSE

"If you get up in the morning and resolve to see Nature, you will see it in a supernatural manner. You will hear with your spirit the morning star and his fellows sing together; also, you will hear the sons of God shouting together for joy with them, particularly the little ones,—sparrows, greenfinches, linnets, and the like."—*Fors Clavigera*, Letter 60, § 3.[1]

The Sunday morning was bright, clear, and beautiful. The dew sparkled like diamonds on the sweet-scented meadow flowers and grasses, adorning them as brides in the boundless temple of the Lord. The wedding songs were sung by choirs of finches, blackbirds, and larks; the old mountains looked down as witnesses, bearded, grave, and solemn, with the roses of youth on their furrowed cheeks; and the golden sun was as the priest of God, scattering bridal blessings in his sparkling beams. The thousand-voiced song and the magnificence of the morning awoke the Paysan early, and he walked about his farm with a heart full of gratitude and gladness. As he went with high step and long strides through the thick grass, paused at the luxuriant cornfield and the well-kept plantation of gently-waving flax, or observed the trees laden with fruit, he did not think only of the profit he hoped to make, but he raised his heart in devout thankfulness to God, who had so richly prospered him, whose goodness fills the earth, and whose glory and wisdom are new every morning. He reflected that man's praise should not be wanting whilst all Nature was full of joy. As the tree in its stateliness, as the cornfield in its fulness, so man should show forth the praises of his Creator in his whole being, not only with his lips, but in his life. "Thanks be to God," thought he; "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. It is true that we are only poor sinners, we have but a small beginning of goodness, but our hearts are turned towards Him. We never eat without returning heartfelt thanks to Him, and we never spend a day in forgetfulness of Him." But he became sorrowful when he thought of Ulric, royally endowed as he was with health and strength, yet unmindful of his Creator, and basely misusing His gifts. He often stood still, considering what he could say to influence him for good. As he cared much for his own soul, he cared also for the souls of others. When a servant was sick in body he would send for the doctor, and he could not be less concerned in a case of soul sickness. That it is not so with all masters is one of the great misfortunes of this age.

The farmer delayed unconsciously, and the mistress said they would begin breakfast if the master did not come. At last he came in at the

[1] [Not quoted textually: see Vol. XXVIII. p. 463.]

kitchen door with the kindly question, Is breakfast ready? She answered gently that they might have had it long before if he had been there,—whom could he have been talking with? He answered seriously, With the good God. The tears came into her eyes, and she looked at him very thoughtfully while she poured out the coffee, and the maids called the men, and placed the food upon the table.

The farmer broke the silence by saying, Who is going to church to-day? The wife said, I am, and I have already plaited my hair, that I may be in good time. Several child-voices said, I will go with you, mother. But the men and maids remained silent. When the master repeated the question, one wanted shoes, another stockings, and it was evident that no one had the least wish to go. Then he said this state of things must not continue; it was strange if they had time for everything except church-going. In the morning there was no getting any one out of the house, in the afternoon they could not get off fast enough, and they stayed out as late as they could. He thought it a bad thing to have a mind for pleasure and folly, and no thought for their souls. And he must tell them quite plainly that no master could have confidence in servants who had cast God out of their hearts and become untrue to Him. To-day there was no reason for staying at home and lounging about the house, and he would not have it. Besides, he wanted some errands done. He must have forty pounds of salt; the two maids could fetch that and relieve each other. Hans Jacob (the other servant-man) should go to the mill and ask when they could have some chaff; it was cheaper than going to Berne for it, and the miller who ground his corn would rather let him have it than another. But who will cook the dinner if you send everybody out? asked the mother. Oh, said the father, Anna-Bäbeli (his twelve-year-old little daughter) can see to it. She must learn to manage, and she will like to do so. Ulric will stay at home with me. Kleb is near calving, and things might go badly without care and attention. While saying these words he looked hard at the mother, who understood that he wished to be alone with Ulric, in order to talk with him, secured from the sharp ears of the curious maids. They thought it very hard to have to wash and comb themselves so soon. They liked to reserve their full splendour for the afternoon, and they were afraid the polish would be all worn off too early. As to dressing themselves twice in the day, that was not to be thought of by Bernese peasant maids. They could indeed look in the glass very often to see that all was in order, especially the little curl on the forehead. Hans was no better pleased; he had not shaved, and his razor would cut nothing. He had thought of missing this Sunday and getting it sharpened during the week, but the master said he would lend him his, and use it later himself. Many difficulties and hindrances occurred to both of the maids, who happened to be on good terms with each other. One could not find her best pocket-handkerchief, and she would almost have enjoyed defying the farmer, but the other advised her not, and promised to lend her hers. There was no sign of their being ready when the mistress was taking leave of John, and giving final directions to Anna-Bäbeli; one could not arrange her chemisette to her mind, and the other was polishing her shoes. Mareili, said the mistress, tell them that I am going on, and they must come after, and be in church before the bell has

stopped, and they are not to rush into church as if they were shot out of a gun.

She walked on in a stately manner, wearing a sprig of rosemary in her bodice, and holding a child by each hand, while her face shone with motherly joy. This was well justified by the appearance of the children; the pretty little John, with a red handkerchief round his neck and a pink in his cap, was delighted to carry his mother's psalm-book, and the blooming little Mareili in a sulphur-coloured hat, wore a beautiful nosegay in her pretty bodice. A quarter of an hour afterwards, the two maids, as red as crabs, hastened along the same road, but the head maid finding she had forgotten the salt bag, sent the under maid back to fetch it, and told her to be very quick, or the mistress would be angry. It occasionally happens thus in the world; the superior does a stupid thing, the underling has to make it good.

In the meantime the master had shaved, and looked round the stable; he stood on the broad balcony of the house, and considered, while filling his pipe, in what way he could best work on the heart of Ulric. But the lecture was not to come off yet. He saw a little Berne wägeli * drawn by a fine horse, with handsomely mounted harness, turn off the high road and approach the farm; and he soon recognised his sister and her family on the seats of it. He welcomed his guests with hearty goodwill, though he could not help regretting that his wife was away at church. He helped his sister and the children in the difficult descent from the high carriage, lifting down the little ones in his arms, and urged them all to enter the house. But his brother-in-law would not be satisfied without seeing to the horse; he wanted to know how he was attended to. Also he wished to hear his fine animal admired, and Ulric was not backward in doing so, as he felt more cheerful than he had done for a long time. Ulric well knew his master's design, and was greatly relieved by the happy arrival which had deferred it. Indoors, the farmer directed Anna-Bäbeli to make some coffee, he himself descended to the cellar for cream, cheese, and bread, so that all might be ready to the girl's hand. The little thing did her very best, and wouldn't have lost for an empire the chance of showing her mother and godmother how clever she could be. Aussi,† her aunt did not fail to praise her coffee, adding that her Lizbeth could not manage so well, though she was twenty-seven weeks older.

Trini, said the farmer presently, the preaching will not be over for some time, you will do me a favour if you will prepare the dinner. But Trini declined, and said she did not like to meddle with other people's butter-tubs, she did not much like it herself. Whereupon the farmer told Anna-Bäbeli to put more meat in the boiler, and a fine ham, so that all might be ready for her mother to set to work with. Anna-Bäbeli would have liked to go on and do everything, and there is no

* A light char with double seats, capable practically of conveying all the family, however numerous.

† My reasons for adopting in English the French word "aussi" were given in *Fors Clavigera*.[1]

[1] [See, again, Vol. XXVII. p. 550 *n.*]

knowing what she might have undertaken, if her mother had not arrived, in great haste and anxiety. She had seen, from a distance, the wägeli standing before the door, and taken a rapid mental review of the situation. There was no time to cook more meat now, her husband would never have thought of it, and Anna-Bäbeli was only a child. She looked into the boiler first thing, and was greatly astonished to see the added meat and ham. When the greetings were over, Trini said, How would you have liked it, Eisi, if I had gone to your butter-tub? John wanted me to get forward with the cooking.

It would have been quite right if you had, said Eisi, but in her heart she was glad she had not, and said to herself, It would not have been pleasant, and John is now and then just as stupid as when I married him; men-folk can never be taught.

The meal occupied a good while, and after chatting and grumbling about the maids, who did not return with the salt-bag, they separated to spend the afternoon according to their various tastes.

The children traded in rabbits; John's boy sold a beautiful ash-grey female to his cousin, who was getting out his purse, and paying down three batzen, in great delight at what he believed a good bargain. The mothers came upon this little transaction, and the mistress of the house said they had plenty of rabbits to give, and John ought not to think of taking a kreutzer, had he no manners? The boy was puzzled, and almost tearful; he had done all in good faith, and he had never seen his father give cows and horses. Trini took his part, but Eisi remained firm. At last the matter was happily ended by the promise that they should all shortly visit their aunt, and that a beautiful long-haired rabbit should then be given in exchange to little John.

Trini and Eisi walked together to the plantations; the spring-tails* had injured the flax, and the hemp had grown rather unevenly. This was a great trouble to Eisi. Trini congratulated herself inwardly because her sister-in-law's flax had suffered more than her own; she thought the crops had been better when *she* lived there; however, she did not seem to perceive anything amiss, but praised all that she saw. Some fine yellow turnips moved Trini to envy; she said she would pay any money for seed of that kind. When Eisi said she would give her some, thinking to herself she might mix in some other sort, Trini promised her some beans she had certainly never seen the like of—the pods were half a foot long, they were as broad as her thumb, and melted in the mouth like sugar. Eisi thanked her very much, but thought to herself, I must take something off that. She could not understand how Trini could have a kind of bean of which *she* had heard nothing.

In the meantime, John took his brother-in-law into the stable, and they had a talk about the horses; the visitor praised them certainly, but showed by gesture and remark that he thought himself very knowing, and too good a judge not to see the weak points. Then they passed on to the cows. John told when one would be dry, how much milk another gave, and so on. The brother-in-law, in a careless manner, ascertained all

* To avoid the interruption of notes, I will give a little glossary of Helvetian words and things at the end of the book. "Spring-tails" are some kind of vermin.

particulars about a fine young black cow, and at last asked her price. John said she was not for sale, and he would not sell her if a certain sum were not offered. The brother-in-law said that was far too much; she was certainly a fine beast, but he had seen finer, and she would calve at the wrong time for him; he had two cows which would soon be dry, and if there were a scarcity of milk there would be a disturbance in the house. They bargained down to the difference of a thaler, but neither would give in any farther, so the transaction was closed. However, the brother-in-law bespoke the calf (if it was a cow-calf), and John promised it should not go too dear.

So the afternoon passed, and Trini looked for her husband in order to propose leave-taking.

Eisi urged that it was still early, and they must take something before they went. Then the handsome coffee-pot appeared again, a fine roll of butter, ham, cheese, cakes, beautifully white bread, honeycomb, cherry jam, and sweet wine. Trini threw up her arms, and made great exclamations at the sight of this repast; said they had had such a good dinner, they wanted nothing; they would find the difference when they came to them, *she* could not entertain them in this style. Eisi said she must be joking, it was from her she had learned to make such a spread; when they were with them, they seemed to be eating all day. By degrees, they did honour to the meal, though not without much pressing. When the coffee-pot had given place to the bottle, and some wine had been taken on the score of health, they mounted at last into the waggon, which had been for some time standing ready for them. The seat had to be held for Trini, the children with slices of cake peeping out of their pockets had to be packed in; the father seemed as if he must crush them all as he took his place, but the little arms were again visible, and by no means alarmingly still.

When the clearing away was finished, and all was in order in the house, John said, Mother, will you get the lantern ready for us? Ulric and I must stay up with the cow, she will calve before morning. Ulric said Michael's Hans had promised to help him to watch to-night, and if anything was amiss, it would be time enough to wake the master. The farmer said he should decline Hans, Michael would want him in the morning, and he knew by experience what a servant was worth after sitting up all night. Ulric thought his fellow-servant might help him, but this second effort to avoid the master's company was also in vain. John said he intended to be there himself from the beginning, things had gone badly last time.

CHAPTER III

AN INSTRUCTION DURING THE NIGHT

"A just and benignant mastership."—*Time and Tide*, § 4.

After they had hung up the lantern in the stable, and given the horses their feed for the night, the master himself bedded the cow, which began to be restless; and then, remarking that she might go for an hour or two, and she would let them know when she wanted them, invited Ulric to come and smoke a pipe with him on the bench outside. It was a warm night in May; few stars were visible; distant voices and the sound of far-off wheels alone disturbed the quiet night.

Have you bethought yourself, Ulric? asked the master.

Ulric answered quietly that there was a good deal to consider; he could not agree with the master in everything, but he could be satisfied to remain. It is a general principle with the Bernese peasant to affect indifference to the things he has most at heart when the interests of others are adverse to his: and consummate diplomatists might take lessons from him; but it is a bad principle, and it gives rise to much evil. Coolness and a show of indifference take the place of warmth and kindness; and as the glow of heaven-born charity communicates itself and hearts are drawn to each other, so this coldness is also communicated, and a chill of estrangement widens all differences between man and man, so that most deplorable results ensue. Happily, in this case the master understood the matter, and did not take it amiss; he said it was the same with him, he had nothing against Ulric, but if he remained there, he must change in many respects. He should like to know who was to blame, and if he was not to venture to speak in his own house, when, for days together, he heard no civil word, and saw a face as black as a thunder-cloud.

He could not help it, if he had a cross face, said Ulric; he had nothing to complain of in the master, or any one else. But he was only a poor servant lad, he never could be good for much, he had been born into the world to be wretched, and if he tried to forget his misery and have a little pleasure, every one came down upon him, tried to crush him, and to thrust him into misfortune. He could not look pleasant at that.

But you know I do not thrust you into misfortune, said the master; on the contrary, I wish you well. But when a young fellow is unsteady and intemperate, he brings himself into misery, and he is himself the cause of his own ruin. You might have learned something by your wretched state of mind all this week; you have been frightened

to death when any woman approached the house lest she should be Anna-Lisi; and you have made us and our cattle suffer for your inquietude, after the manner of so many servants, who vent all their anger on their employers, their cattle, and their tools. Your misery is of your own making, you were not born to it any more than we were. No, Ulric, you must leave off your disorderly ways for your own sake and for mine; I cannot put up with them any longer.

Ulric said he had done nothing bad.

Oh, said the master, do you think drunkenness is something good? and do you imagine that your visits to Anna-Lisi were very innocent?

There are many worse than I am, replied Ulric, and I know many farmers with whom I should not like to keep company.

That may be, said the master; but tell me, Ulric, does one bad man make another good? and if some farmers are drunkards and rascals, is that any reason why you should become a disorderly sot?

But one must have some enjoyment, said Ulric; it is not a crime to take a little pleasure.

But what sort of pleasure is it? Can that be called pleasure which brings such misery after it? Certainly you must enjoy yourself, every one has a right to do so, but it must be in good and permitted ways. It is a sign whether a man is good or bad, whether he takes his pleasure in good or bad things.

You may well talk, master; you have the length and breadth of a fine farm, well-filled stables, plentiful granaries, the best of wives, thriving children,—you have every chance of enjoyment. If I were in your place I should have no mind for drinking, nor for Anna-Lisi either. But what have I? I am a poor fellow, with no one in the world to care for me; my father and mother are dead, and my sisters look out for themselves. If I were ill, there would be no home for me to go to; and if I were to die, I should be laid in the earth like a dog with no one to grieve after me. Why do they not smother children who only come into the world to be miserable?

And the great strong Ulric began to cry bitterly.

No, no, said the master, you are not so badly off as you think. Leave off your wild life, and you may be a fine man yet. Many a one who has had no more than you to begin with, has now house and farm, and stalls full of cattle.

Oh yes! but those things do not happen any longer. Besides, a man must have better luck than I have.

That is a foolish speech, my poor Ulric! How can you talk of luck, when you throw away all the chances which God has given you? If you persist in the conviction that you will never be good for anything, of course you will remain worthless; but if you believe in a better future, you will work for it with hearty good will.

But, for God's sake, master, how am I to become rich? What low wages I have! how many clothes I want! and I have debts besides. What good would it do if I were to be saving with so little, and to allow myself no pleasure?

What! said the master, in debt at your age, in full health, and with no one but yourself to provide for? What is to become of you? you will sink

lower and lower, and become a thorough vagabond. But I tell you frankly, it would be a thousand pities, and I am really grieved about you.

That pays off no scores, grumbled Ulric; a poor fellow like me remains a poor fellow.

Look to the cow now, interrupted the master, and when Ulric returned and said they were not needed yet, he continued, I have always remembered our Pastor's explanation of *service:* his instruction was so clear and sensible, that I often think of it—I know that it has had a good influence on the fortunes of many. All men, he said, receive from God two talents, time and strength; of these they must give an account, and their life in this world and the next depends upon the use they make of them. When a man has no employment for his time, nor exercise for his strength, he lends these two talents, for appointed wages, to some one who has more work than his own time and strength can accomplish; this is called service. Now through a very false and mistaken idea, most servants regard their position as a misfortune, and look upon their masters as their oppressors, if not their enemies. They aim at doing as little as possible; they chatter, waste, and sleep away their days, thus cheating the master by depriving him of the time and strength which they have agreed to give him for wages. But as all injustice brings its punishment with it, while injuring the master they injure themselves much more, by forming bad habits, which cannot be easily lost. If a little maid, or a farm lad, continually shirks work, or does it as carelessly as possible, always resenting reproof and taking no interest in daily duty, in course of years this becomes a habit which they take to all masters, and when at last they marry, who has to bear the miserable consequences of this idleness and dishonesty but themselves? They follow them in want and wretchedness to the grave, and beyond the grave, to the judgment-seat of God. Such habits make many men a burden to themselves and a displeasure to God and man,—visible proofs, to the thoughtful observer, that the unfaithful* punish themselves.

And just as a man by his conduct forms his habits, so also he gains a character. Every one works for this character from the cradle upwards; each little performance leads on to a reputation for worth or worthlessness amongst men. This character opens or closes hearts to us, makes us sought after or avoided. Even the most insignificant persons are, by their daily habits, forming their characters, and making for themselves a certain reputation, which, in some way or other, becomes known in their neighbourhood. It is in vain for them to blame earlier employers, this does not make good the character,—habit has long formed it. How much depends upon character, and how little it is esteemed by those to whom it is of the most vital importance! Who will employ a man or maid who has bad habits and a bad character? Such an one has no place on earth or in heaven!

Therefore it is plain, said the minister, that those who go into service must not regard it as a slavery, but look upon the master as one who,

* Unfaithful to their earthly masters, the Paysan means. The reader may perhaps here complain of the author's dulness, and say he has often heard all this before. If he bethink himself, he will find he has not before heard it so thoroughly, clearly, and firmly said; and Gotthelf's book is not presented to him as containing new things; but as containing the things we all have eventually to learn, told in the best way.

by the kind providence of God, has work and wages to give them. They should regard the time of service as an opportunity to be used diligently for their own improvement, and the interest of their employers. When the master profits by their industry, they benefit themselves also, and make for themselves a right good name amongst men. If they meet with a bad master, they must not think to punish him by bad performance; this would injure their own habits, their own characters. But if a servant is faithful and skilful in his work, he acquires a value which no one can take from him, he gains a good reputation, he is gladly trusted and employed; the world stands open to him, and he will always find people ready to help him, because a good name is the best security.

The pastor spoke of a third point, which applies especially to you, Ulric. He said men wished for pleasure, and it was right and natural that they should have it, especially in their youth. If a man hates service, and does his work against the grain, he seeks enjoyment in something else. He begins to be wild and drunken, and to occupy his mind day and night with the wrong things in which he finds his pleasure. But if men and maids once see that they may improve, and make a good place for themselves in the world by good habits and good character, then they begin to learn to take pleasure rightly. They love their work, and they are always interested in learning how to do things well; they are pleased if the animals thrive, and the crops are good; they never say, What does it matter to me? It is no concern of mine! Indeed they like to accomplish something unusual, or to undertake something difficult, so that their best powers are developed. They take pleasure in their master's cows and horses and fields, almost as if they belonged to them. Thus they become honourable men and women, for whom corrupting pleasure has no attractions. They have the best habits, the best characters, the best enjoyments.

This is what our minister said. I fancy I can hear him now, and I have seen a hundred times that he was right. Profit by it, Ulric, and you will be a fine fellow yet.

CHAPTER IV

ANOTHER CONVERSATION WITH A GOOD MASTER

"Believe me, the way to deal with your drunken workman is not to lower his wages, but to mend his wits."—*Crown of Wild Olive*, § 149.

Ulric's answer was cut short by the cow. All went well, and she soon after gave birth to a coal-black calf, with a white star on its forehead. Ulric was diligent and attentive; he handled the little calf very gently, and examined its points with special goodwill.

When they had done with the cow, and she had had the onion soup which is usual on such occasions, the day began to dawn, and the conversation was not renewed. There were many claims on the attention of the farmer, and he had to go away that day to transact some business for the commune. There was a tacit understanding that Ulric was to remain, and when John returned in the evening his wife could not sufficiently praise the lad's goodwill, thoughtfulness, and attention to his work.

In Ulric quite new thoughts and feelings began to arise; he reflected on the master's talk, with a growing conviction that he was in the right. It was pleasant to him to think that he might improve himself and his condition. He perceived that this could not be done by intemperance and dissipation. It was a new idea to him that he might acquire anything in addition to his wages, and that scrupulous faithfulness to his master would advance his own interest also, by forming his habits and character in the right way. Then he recalled instances of farm-servants whose good or bad conduct had produced results which quite justified all that the master had been saying.

Only one thing he could not understand,—it seemed quite impossible for him ever to save money. His wages were thirty crowns, two shirts, and a pair of shoes; he was four crowns in debt, and he had drawn some of his wages in advance. How could he pay debts and save? He must, on the contrary, get deeper and deeper into debt. He needed, at least, ten crowns for outside clothing, without being over-well dressed, and eight more for stockings, shoes, shirts, and washing. Another most necessary * piece of expenditure was a little packet of tobacco every week, amounting to two crowns in the course of the year. There were ten crowns remaining, but there were fifty Saturday nights, also fifty Sundays, six of which were regular dancing-days; there were musters, markets, and various other festive occasions. He must reckon two batzen a week for wine and brandy,—who could dream of denying himself anything so indispensable? But that would come to four crowns. After close reflection, he proposed to himself to miss three of the dances, but the others must each cost him at least a crown;

* The calculation, observe, is wholly Ulric's. See the Paysan's reduction of it below.

he had to pay the fiddler, invite a girl to dance, treat her and himself, and take her home. He counted up and reckoned backwards and forwards, but the result was always the same. He must have clothes, must have his things washed, could not go barefoot. Everything confirmed the mournful fact that he had nothing to save, and too little to spend.

After a few days, the master and man had to drive some little distance for a cartful of stones, to set a new stove in one of the rooms. As the road was steep and the work had been laborious, the farmer put up at an inn on their way home, called for wine and food, and treated Ulric; this opened his heart and made him communicative during the remainder of the way. He told his master that two days since he had had a ton weight taken off his mind; that he had met Anna-Lisi quite suddenly as he was cutting fresh grass for the cows, and he had started as if he had been bitten by a serpent. She had begun by saying she had not seen him for a fortnight, and she had feared he was ill. He had answered with excuses, said a horse had been sprained—the master had been absent. But she had persisted, and gone so far as to reproach him for his inconstancy, and to urge that he had often said he would marry her. Then he told her roundly that he had said nothing of the sort, and that he had no more to say to her. After that he had continued his work with the greatest satisfaction, and a feeling of intense relief.

This was good news to the master, who thought proper, however, to season his congratulations with very timely exhortations to Ulric to persevere in his wise resolutions.

Master, said Ulric after a pause, I have thought about what your minister said, and he certainly did not talk foolishly, but I am sure he cannot have known anything about the wages of a farm-servant; he was not aware that he has heavy expenses, and that he is not as well paid as a Vicar. But you will understand it better, though you farmers do not know what it is to pay for washing and to have your tailoring and shoemaking done out of the house. I have calculated twenty times a day, till my head has been ready to split, but it always comes to the same, out of nothing comes nothing! He went through each item of his expenditure, thought his reckoning conclusive, and exclaimed at the end, Now, what can you say against that?

The calculation is correct in your way of making it, said the farmer, but one can reckon quite otherwise, my man! I will show you how I look at it, and we will see what you will say to my way. I will not alter what you have put down for clothes—you might even spend more; a respectable young man should have plenty of linen, and not wear the same shirts on Sundays and working days. But two crowns are far too much for tobacco. A man who is moving about amongst hay and straw ought not to smoke until his work is done, and with me you need never smoke to drive away hunger, as they profess to do in some places. *If you would leave off the habit altogether,* it would be a benefit to you in two ways; *a man who does not smoke is always better paid.**

* A wonderful admission, this, from a German author. The joyful Editor enforces it with italics.[1]

[1] [For Ruskin's hatred of tobacco, see Vol. XVII. p. 334, and Vol. XXV. pp. 227, 284.]

As to the ten crowns which you reckon for merrymakings of every kind, I cross them through from beginning to end. You do not like that! You look as surprised as a stork at a new roof! But if you wish to recover yourself, and make quite a fresh start, you must face the matter bravely, and decide not to waste one kreutzer of your wages. If you merely propose to draw in a little, your efforts will be futile. You might just as well pour oil and water on the fire at the same time! Old associations will lead you on, and you will again spend two or three weeks' wages amongst your boon companions,—you will lose confidence and self-respect, and sink back into your old life.

But you need not look so scared; it is nothing so very terrible. Think how many men never enter an inn. Not only poor day-labourers, who have enough to do to earn their bread, but well-to-do people, who have the habit of avoiding useless expenditure. *They* cannot understand how a reasonable man can be content to waste. I once came home early with a little man from Langenthal market. He wondered, he said, to see me going back already, he generally had to return alone. I answered him that I had nothing more to do there, and I had no wish to spend half a day at the inn, wasting my time and my money. I think as you do, he said. I began with nothing, and I had to support my parents. Now I am the owner of a house and two cows, and I have also fields and meadows. But I never laid out a kreutzer uselessly, except once at Burgsdorf, when I spent half a batz for a white roll, which I ought to have done without.

I could not say so much, I answered, I have spent many a batz without consideration, but one may carry saving too far. A man must live.

I live, I assure you, said my friend, and happily too! A kreutzer which I save does me more good than a new thaler to one who wastes it. If I had not begun so, I should have come to nothing. A poor young fellow has not the sense to leave off at the right time, if he once begins to squander. But you must not think that I am a miser; many poor creatures who have gone away empty from large farm-houses have been warmed and filled at my fireside. I have not forgotten God who has prospered me, and who will soon call me to appear before Him.

I looked at the man with great respect; no one would have thought from his unpretending exterior that there was so much in him. Before we parted I wanted to pay for a bottle of good wine in return for his good discourse, but he would not have it, he said he required nothing, and it came to the same thing whether it was his money or mine which was spent uselessly. After that, I never saw him again; he has probably given in his account, and if no one had a heavier one than he, it would be well with many.

Look at every kreutzer you spend uselessly as one badly spent. Stay at home, and you will save not only the kreutzer, but much besides. All servants complain how many pairs of shoes and how many clothes they wear, through being out in all weathers, but do you know how they run through the most clothes? By going about at night in snow and wet, to everything that is going on. Of course when clothes are worn day and night, they cannot last so long. And tell me, how do a man's Sunday clothes look when he has been fighting and tumbling in the mud and rolling in the mire?

No! these habits will grow if they are not promptly checked, and you will soon need twenty crowns, instead of ten, for indulgences which lead to an old age of beggary and disgrace.

And it is not as if you had barely thirty crowns; you have money given you whenever a beast is sold: spend this, when you have to go to an inn, or occasionally to a muster. You have already drawn great part of your wages, but if you will take my advice, you will get out of debt this year; next year you can begin to save. Besides, how do you know that I shall never give you more than thirty crowns? If a servant is diligent and trustworthy, and manages so well in my absence that I need not return to vexation and disorder, I am not careful within a crown or two. Think of it, Ulric! the better the habits, the better the character, the better also the wages.

Ulric raised his head at the end of this speech; at last he said, That would be very fine, but it will scarcely be: I could never persevere in such a life.

Well, try for a month, said the master, and see what it is like. Keep from drinking and dissipation, and all will be well.

CHAPTER V

AN ENEMY COMES AND SOWS TARES AMONGST THE WHEAT

"Here is your chief duty, you workmen—to be true to yourselves, and to us who would help you.

"It is useless to put your heads together, if you can't put your hearts together."
—*Crown of Wild Olive*, § 43.

All went well for many Sundays. Ulric attended public worship and entertained reasonable thoughts of life and duty. After a while he had two new thalers in his pocket, and began to think the master might be about right. In his work he was another man; as he slept at night, rested on Sundays, and lived temperately, his strength was in full vigour, and he seemed incapable of fatigue. The master rejoiced in this improvement, and took care to show his satisfaction by putting Ulric in the way of any little advantage when beasts were sold or bought; he took him with him to fairs and markets, and sent him out now and then to transact business; so Ulric had his pleasure, and the farmer paid all reasonable expenses on the way.

The history of the jealousy of the sons of Jacob is one which is often repeated, especially amongst servants. When one is better than the rest, and therefore preferred by the master, the others hate, persecute, and mock him, and do not rest until they have driven him away, or made him as bad as themselves. It does not suit them for the master to see how much work a good man or maid can do; more will be expected from themselves, and their own behaviour will be more evidently bad, when contrasted with superior manners.

No sooner did the other servants perceive the change in Ulric, than they began to taunt him and to make spiteful remarks. He must be a fool to go out of his way to please the master, *they* would not like to be favourites, and to be spies on their fellow-servants. If they did not work like black slaves every minute of the day, the master knew every moment they rested.* This made Ulric cross, for he had never thought of telling tales of the others, and now for fear of seeming on too good terms with the master, he sometimes let himself be led away so far as to make common cause with them. But he felt ill at ease, and recovered himself; for he could not but see that on his master's side there was the greatest kindness of heart, and that he should be wise to take his advice.

Ulric felt as if two powers were contending for his soul; he heard two

* Meaning that Ulric told him.

voices, one of a good, and the other of an evil angel. He remembered what he had once heard in a sermon about our first parents in Paradise. God had spoken to them and forbidden them something for their own good; then the serpent persuaded them to distrust God and question His command. The minister had said that there are two voices which accompany men all through life, and speak to them from the mouths of their fellow-creatures. There are few who are not at some time urged and advised by the good and true, and at another tempted and flattered by the wicked and designing. Which voice is most willingly listened to, and which is most readily believed? Alas! the evil influence too often prevails, and so it was with Ulric.

The neighbours began to observe him; amongst others, a man named Resli, who was unfriendly with Bodenbauer,* and ready, in any case, to entice away other people's servants, if he thought they would serve his own turn. Then he would stimulate them, by praise, to undue effort, laughing in his sleeve at their exertions; he would wink at their immorality and lend them money, so that they were bound to him like slaves, and completely in his power.

This man had had his eye on Ulric for a long time; he was handsome, and would be an attraction to the maid-servants; he was a good strong beast of burden, unsteady, and rather simple,—just the one for him to make use of and wear out.

He began by joking him about the way in which he spent his Sundays; he had better be a parson and go to meeting, but there were sly tricks going on there also! Ulric was so vexed that he should look like a parson, that he felt a wild desire to show at once that he was no better than others. What will not youth be ashamed of? not only of being less rich, less handsome, less strong, less finely dressed, but also of being less bad than others.

However, Ulric restrained himself, and as Resli found that mockery did not succeed, he tried another formidable weapon, namely flattery. He began to praise Ulric's strength and activity—he had never seen any one fit to hold a candle to him—*he* had not had the luck of meeting with such a servant. It was only a pity that Bodenbauer did not think more of him,—he knew how to work him hard enough, and to spare himself. The fact was that the master had in the spring allowed Ulric to sow an acre while he harrowed, and to hold the plough while he led the horses, in order that Ulric might gain skill and experience, remarking that a farm-servant has a much better chance if he understands the whole labour on the land, and if he can do all kinds of work he may one day be head-man.

Very few fathers will trust their sons to sow the seed or to guide the plough; they keep these works in their own hands as long as they have

* "Bodenbauer," literally Ground-peasant or Bottom-peasant,—as Boden See, Bottom-lake, of the lake of Constance.[1] Meaning, I suppose, thorough, or to the bottom—Peasant. I shall henceforward use "Bodenbauer" or "Farmer .Boden" as may suit the sentence.

[1] [Compare *Bible of Amiens*, ch. ii. § 25 (Vol. XXXIII.).]

a leg to stand on; and just this kindness of Bodenbauer's was taken amiss. Ulric became more and more set up and conceited; he thought such a treasure could not be met with every day, and that his master could never get on without him. I should just like to see how they would manage if you were to leave, said Resli, rubbing his hands. They would then know your value, and regret that they had not gone the right way to keep you.

Many servants have been enticed away by this kind of speech; they are flattered by the thought that they are quite out of the common way, that they can never be replaced, and that the master will beg and pray them to remain. So they leave; but no one calls after Benz or Lisi to say they cannot get on without them; they go further each Christmas, everywhere new servants slip into their places, and they are neither missed nor regretted. How true it is that in all positions people like much to believe themselves indispensable, yet do little to render themselves really so!

We must not therefore be very much surprised that Ulric could not resist this pleasing bait. His heart swelled with pride, he thought no more of the two voices, but listened only to the one which flattered his self-love. When the master gave him the chance of perfecting himself in various kinds of labour, he thought him unjust and exacting, and his work became burdensome to him. The crafty Resli had a malicious pleasure in watching the effect of the poison which he had so skilfully administered. The Paysan, on the contrary, perceived with sorrow that a dark cloud had arisen between his servant and himself, and could not comprehend the cause of it, but, true to his habits, he waited for time to reveal the unknown: there was no immediate necessity for speaking to Ulric about it.

CHAPTER VI

HOW THE GAME OF HURNUSS* HELPED TO SOBER ULRIC

"The fool, whatever his wit, is the man who doesn't know his master."—*Fors Clavigera*, Letter 54, § 2.

It had long been the custom for a hurnuss match to be played between the men of Ulric's parish, Muhliwald, and those of Bronzwyl. As the time approached, both villages were in a state of great excitement, for this was an event of surpassing interest to men and women, to young and old. The hurnuss is a game which is played in the canton of Berne, in spring and autumn, when there is nothing which can be injured in the fields and meadows. Youths and men take part in it, and few games require so much strength and quickness of hand and eye and foot. The players are divided into two parties, one to project the hurnuss, the other to strike it as it flies in the air.

The hurnuss is a little disc, not two inches in diameter, very thin at the edge, and somewhat thicker in the middle. It is placed upright, and slightly fixed with clay on a plank, which rests on the ground at one end, and is propped up at the other by a support a foot and a half high. Some twenty feet from this plank the boundary is marked out; this is from ten to twenty paces broad in front, and widens gradually on each side. There is no back boundary, so that there is often a long chase after the flying disc. The striker hits the hurnuss with a stick, detaching it, and sending it fifty or sixty feet high, and to the distance of seven or eight hundred feet. The opponents with wooden racquets try to strike the hurnuss, so as to divert it from falling inside the boundary. If it fall outside the boundary three times in succession, the striker must give place to another; and when all of one side have lost the right to strike again, it is the turn of the other side to project the shining hurnuss.

The dexterity of the skilful players is surprising; they wheel rapidly round, spring backwards, hit with clear resounding blows. This fine game is a purely national one, and it deserves to be highly esteemed. A distinguished player is famous through a whole district, and the players of different villages have regular matches, after which the losing side treats the other to a supper.

The choice of the players who had to maintain the honour of the village was made with the most scrupulous care, and it was amusing to see how high those who were chosen held their heads, while the others

* "Hurnuss," "hornet," so called from the *whizzing* sound of the disc in the air.

looked small and discomfited. Ulric was one of the former, he was a first-rate hand; if he sometimes failed in striking the hurnuss from the plank, he was one of the cleverest in catching and hitting it. Farmer Boden advised him to decline. It is not for such as you, he said; if your side loses, you will have certain expense, and there is sure to be fighting in the evening, which costs no one knows how much. That may do for rich farmers' sons, who like to sport their thalers; even they are often impoverished for years with fines and compensations, and sometimes banishment ensues.

Ulric could not but see that the master was right, but he felt it hard not to be able to show himself before the crowd of spectators as a chosen hurnuss man. When he went to decline, his answer was, of course, unwillingly received: unfortunately Resli was by, and Ulric was not proof against his representations. He told Ulric that Farmer Boden did not wish to spare him, and to be obliged to fodder the beasts himself; he had known him from his youth, and he was up to his hypocritical ways of gaining his own ends. He contrived to keep his servants in, and pretended it was for their advantage, just to prevent them from hearing what wages and privileges they might have elsewhere. Now he only wanted Ulric not to get acquainted with the rich young farmers, and perhaps make his fortune. He ended by advising Ulric to say that they would not let him off, adding that it would be better his master should grumble a little, than that the whole village should be up in arms against him. Ulric hesitated, then yielded: such words still found credit with him, and he liked the idea of the company of the rich young farmers; he did not know that here also the proverb holds good, that it is ill to eat cherries with great lords, because they eat the fruit themselves, and throw the stones and stalks to their companions. Those who associate with superiors must be very wise, or they have to pay dearly for the honour, and they are repulsed with disdain when they cease to be useful or agreeable. This is as accurately true of the men of Muhliwald and Bronzwyl, as of those of Paris and Berne.

When Ulric told his master that he could not get off playing, John did not say much, but advised him to be well on his guard, he should be sorry if he got into difficulties and lost the ground he had already gained. Ulric was touched by this gentleness, and felt half inclined to withdraw after all, but false shame was stronger than good impulse, and he pursued his ill-advised course.

The longed-for Sunday dawned at last; few had been able to sleep during the preceding night, and very few found time to attend public worship. Those who were to take part in the game had their various preparations to make, and the wives had to get dinner ready half-an-hour earlier than usual.

It was still long before the appointed time when the place of meeting was already filled by men who had arrived one by one, and who were examining the implements, to make sure that all were in perfect order. The boys brandished the sticks and pronounced their opinions on the ground with great seriousness and importance, but the old men stood outside with apparent indifference, smoked their short pipes, held their hands in their pockets, and discussed the weather and the crops.

At last they set forth, with the usual advanced guard of noisy children. The combatants marched in half military order, looking very proud and defiant, and as if the fate of Europe depended on their prowess. The patriarchs of the two villages followed with a careless air; one would remark to another that he had half a mind to go to his rye, but he supposed he must see how the young men played; another would talk of the feats he had performed when he was young, and wonder whether such and such a player could match those.

As soon as the men were out of the village, the women began to think how they could view the contest even from a distance. It did not suit their ideas of propriety to go expressly to look on, but various pretexts were quickly found. The little girls went out in long lines, hand in hand, and were soon welcomed by parties of little boys. Some older girls went slowly round the circle, before taking up their position on a little hill which commanded an extensive view.

At last the women set out, one by one, each with her sprig of rosemary, and holding a child by the hand, assuring every one that she must needs go, though it were against her will, the child would not let her have any peace; he had set his little heart on seeing his father strike the hurnuss.

It was a lovely autumn day, bright and clear; the flocks of sheep lay contentedly basking in sunshine on the green earth, and the cloud-flecks rested quietly also in the blue of the far-off sky.

The two parties met in a wide meadow, and arranged themselves for a sport which is a hundred times finer, and a thousand times more national, than low comedy-acting, which neither exercises the body nor improves the mind, and which too often leads to idleness and dissipation.

They arranged most scrupulously the position of the slanting spar, and fixed the hornet upon it, taking great care that the sun should be behind those who had to hit it, and that no dark background should obscure the course of the disc, but that it might be seen as it was struck from its perch straight into the air. Sometimes it springs off so quickly that it is not perceived until some one is made painfully aware of it by a severe cut on the head. Therefore some of the party have the special office of watching it, and pointing it out to the rest, which they do in a very animated manner.

It was after two o'clock when all the players were arranged, and the call sounded, "Will you have it?" The answer came, "Ready!" and a striker stept quickly forward and gave a sounding blow, so that all looked with open-mouthed eagerness, sought the hornet in the air, found it nowhere, heard a second blow, and discovered that the first had been a feint. This time the hornet flew high, fell inside the boundary, and thus made a lawful point.

We do not intend to enter further into detail, or to relate how they quarrelled and disputed about real or supposed cheating, how ready they were to enforce their arguments with their fists, how the older men had to interpose to prevent pitched battles, and how these experienced elders could not refrain from instructing and directing the players from time to time.

It will easily be imagined how the ring of spectators became closer

and thicker, how the mothers watched their sons with eager sympathy, how the girls' hearts bounded when their lovers made successful hits, how the little boys of the two villages made sides and fought with sticks until the mothers and sisters separated them; the fathers and brothers not thinking such a little matter worthy of their interference.

The men of Muhliwald lost—only by one point, but still they lost. They would not yield without a vigorous defence; they tried every art and every device to prove that another turn was due to them, and that the other side had failed in one mark, but all in vain. They were very ill-humoured, and thought the decision of fate altogether unjust, as they had evidently been the best players. Next they accused each other of hitting badly, or of missing in the most stupid manner. The fathers went away grumbling; they had foreseen how it would be; formerly, it would have been otherwise; *they* had never been so clumsy. The women and girls went home with weary steps, and said they did not mind their men having lost the game, if nothing worse happened that night, but they were afraid they would not part without blows. Well, what if they don't? rejoined an old combatant; I've had plenty to do in that way myself, and blows *were* blows when I was a lad, and I'm alive yet!

Ulric had done his part bravely, but a farmer's son, who had himself more than once carelessly missed the hurnuss, taunted him as if the game had been lost through his fault. This mortification, and the prospect of having to pay at least twenty or thirty batzen towards the supper, made him cross and angry; he said he thought he should not be able to go with them, he was obliged to return home to fodder the cattle, as the master might be out. Some one must pay his share, and he would give it to him afterwards. But they said they were not going to let him off like that; he had helped to play, and he must help to pay, and stay with the others, come what might. It would be droll indeed if one were to slink away in that manner! Ulric was obliged to go with them, dissatisfied with himself and with everybody else: he had thought to make merry at other people's expense; now the tables were turned.

It must be confessed that it was a serious ordeal for the men of Muhliwald to be led by their conquerors in triumph to the inn, and to meet the exultant glances of the women and girls of Bronzwyl. They submitted, however, with as defiant an air as they could assume, and they paid out the girls with rude speeches for their mischievous looks and mocking words.

When they reached the inn and refreshed themselves by draughts of wine, the excitement and irritation increased. Reproaches were freely exchanged, and many a fist was raised; however, all were kept within bounds as long as the elders interfered and advised the young men not to begin a fight. But, by degrees, the wine told on them also—they boasted of their own past experiences; they had given such blows in their time that there had been streams of blood in the streets, and the neighbours had rushed out to look on, as if an alarm-bell had rung. Then the men of Muhliwald brought up to the men of Bronzwyl how often they had beaten them at hurnuss, and given them a good thrashing into the bargain. The men of Bronzwyl asked who had won that day, and remarked that if *they* had lost they would not crow so loud.

The older men now took fire, and some scuffling began; here and there a pair grappled with each other, while some powerful men remained quietly beside their bottles, saying a few words from time to time with dignified gravity. These were the proved heroes of bygone times; it was known that if they once stood up it would portend the fall of many, but it was seldom worth their while to exert their strength. They said, I will not have it, Let him go, or *I* will come, and their words seconded the efforts of the innkeeper, who naturally wished for peace on account of his bottles and glasses and chairs and tables. He was a man in general favour, strong and fearless; he stepped between the combatants, separated them, or put outside the door those who would not be restrained. The sweat stood on his brow, and he had a difficult task to accomplish; when he had separated some, others grappled with one another; he called out the more loudly that he was master there, and he would have no fighting: those who wanted to fight must go outside. Consequently, they slipped out one by one, and a confused scuffle ensued; one would lie in wait for another, and before he was well outside, strike at him with random blows. Those who were inside wondered how they were to get out, but they ended in joining the general row, and the struggling and fighting became more bloody and desperate. All this passed under the quiet stars, which were not bright enough for a man to distinguish friend from foe. One or two returned to the inn, faint and covered with blood. The innkeeper went for water for them, and returned, bleeding himself, with his broken bottle in his hand. He told the old heroes he thought their time was come, things were bad enough now.

The masters of battle drank off their wine, beat out their pipes, raised their giant limbs with great deliberation, and stepped slowly out; they would have gone more quickly if they had been called to take the flies off a horse. They looked round at the groups of prostrate and fighting men, and one shouted with a powerful voice that there had been enough of it; they must leave off, or they would come and part them pretty roughly. As the struggle continued, he took the nearest, and flung him like a cannon ball, through one of the groups, into a hedge on the opposite side. The others did their part, and the wildest fighter struggled in the hands of one of these old heroes like a fish in the hands of a cook. The place of combat was soon emptied, the wounded were raised, their wounds were washed, and they were seen home by the old men. Only two of the Brönzwyler men would not go, and demanded a doctor; this meant staying there at the expense of those who had beaten them, until an arrangement should be made for lawful compensation. The old heroes did not approve of this: in their time they would have thought nothing of such flea-bites; but the men held to it; they were poor, and it was with them a question of money.

Ulric had gone to the inn in a state of great excitement; while there he drank plenty of wine; as he had to pay so much, he thought he might as well have his share; he was also in the fight outside, but as he had no special ill-will towards any of the Brönzwyler men, he dealt out hearty blows all round, received many in return, and went home bruised and bleeding, with his Sunday clothes torn and soiled.

When the veterans interfered, the men of Muhliwald had evidently the

advantage, and the two fallen in the lists were both Brönzwyler men. The former, therefore, claimed the victory of the night, and thus consoled themselves for their defeat at the hurnuss-match. The heroes of Waterloo or Morgarten could not have returned more intoxicated with victory. They went home in a riotous manner, breaking the windows and tearing branches off the trees which came in their way.

The next morning, however, the affair had a different aspect, and they did not feel so very jubilant.

When Ulric awoke, his head was hot and painful; he could scarcely move his right arm, his best clothes did not present a cheering appearance, and he could have cried at the thought of the bill of the supper. It is all up with me now, he thought. I was quite right, a poor servant lad can never come to anything; if he exceeds a little, once in a way, it is all over with him. He was quite discouraged and very ill-humoured, and every one felt that he was like a loaded cannon, which might go off at any moment.

In the meantime, the wounded men sent to Muhliwald to know if they could arrange amicably, or if they must apply to a magistrate. Resli answered that they must see if they were much hurt; also that he would consult the rest and give an answer in the morning. Thus the old fox gained time for carrying out a plan which he had already devised. He secretly charged the others to prevail on Ulric to give himself up, and either make an arrangement with them or allow himself to be brought before the magistrate as the offender: thus they would be well out of the scrape themselves, and they would cheat the Bronzwyl men, who would not get much out of Ulric. He was sure Ulric could be got to do it if they gave him good words and fair promises. They must say that they would make it all up to him, and give him a handsome reward besides. They need not hold to more than was convenient.

This was acceptable advice to the interested party, for they were afraid that the magistrates might order, not only fines, but banishment, on this occasion; and though a rich farmer's son loves money, he will pay it ten times over rather than be banished; his father would pay a hundred times as much to keep him, and his mother a thousand!

Resli went to Ulric, as he was foddering the cattle in the evening, and told him the matter looked bad; the Bronzwylers had sent messengers, and they must see how they could get out of it; anyway it must cost a good deal of money. That was like the match to the cannon. Ulric told him, in an explosion of wrath, that he was an old villain, who had urged him into misfortune; he had wanted to draw back, and who had hindered him? The older men, who should have had more sense; and he, Resli, was the worst amongst them. He told him it was hard that a poor servant lad should be done out of a whole year's wages; it was a sin and a shame before God and man!

Resli let him storm away until he was tired, and then assured him that it was just the contrary; they had his good at heart, and if he would be reasonable, they would arrange so that he should be a gainer by the whole affair. He had difficulty in getting a hearing; and when he proposed that Ulric should give himself up as the offender, there was a second and more violent explosion. At last Resli managed to make Ulric understand that

they would back him, and also give him something handsome for himself; he should only make his claim, and they would satisfy him. They could manage it more cheaply in this way, and even if he should be brought before the magistrate and be banished, a fine fellow like him would always find a master, and perhaps he would make his fortune in foreign parts, like many others, who would never have gone if they had not been banished. And the fifty or a hundred crowns compensation would come in well for him; he would have to work a long time before he could get so much. Also, if they could serve him in any other way, he had only to mention it; they would always stand by him. In short, Resli knew so well how to put the case in an attractive form to Ulric, that he promised to go to a meeting that evening for the purpose of arranging the affair. Come, then, said Resli, but do not mention it to your master; it is no affair of his, and there is no occasion to tell him anything of it.

Scarcely had this mischievous neighbour gone than Farmer Boden went to Ulric in the stable, and after some indifferent words, said, Has not Resli been here? did he want me? He did not say so, replied Ulric. The master asked what then had he to say to his servant? Ulric said they had been talking about what had happened yesterday. The master had been foddering the cattle close by, and had heard the whole conversation. It was therefore not difficult to him to bring Ulric, by a series of questions, to confess the truth. Farmer Boden, on account of his natural circumspection, had had an inward struggle before he could decide to mix himself up in an affair which would certainly do him no good, and he had hesitated to take up a servant's cause against a neighbour; but goodwill and kindness conquered. He thought it would be cruel to leave the poor lad in the toils of such a designing hypocrite; and he was also piqued that behind his back his servant should be tampered with, misled, and ill-treated. He said, therefore, to Ulric, You may do as you will, as far as I am concerned. You would not listen to me when I tried to persuade you not to join in the hornet-match. But, if you will be advised, do not be taken in; they want to put you forward, and to shelter themselves behind you. They will promise what you will, but they will perform nothing. If you arrange with the Brönzwyler men, you may pay for it; if you are banished, you may go where you will, not one of them will thank you. Believe me, it is so; I have had experience of such things. But that is dreadful, said Ulric; would they not keep their word? How am I to understand people? You good simpleton, said the master, they keep their word when it suits them, or when they are obliged, but no further in such cases; they are the nastiest transactions in the world. When men of that sort can take any one in, they make merry over his being such an idiot, and laugh till their sides ache. This vexed Ulric very much, and he said, nearly crying, that he could not believe men were so bad; if they were, it would be better not to live in such a world.

Ulric, said the master, you must take people as they are, you cannot alter them; but you may learn to be prudent and sensible, so that they may not be tempted to impose upon you. It is a true and wise saying, "Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." A silly man is a constant temptation to others, who enjoy nothing better than to mislead or deceive him.

Ulric asked what he had better do now. It might be best, said his master, to stop away altogether; but go, and be wary; because they will make you the finest promises, and will swear, and give you every sign of warmth of heart, so that you will think they must be sincere, and it would be foolish to lose such a good chance of advancement for yourself. Then say yes, you agree, but they must give you the matter in writing. Watch the expression of their faces; they will say it is unnecessary, their promise will be sufficient; they would be ashamed to say a thing, and not to do it. However, insist on it, and see that all are named and that each is responsible. That would be very good, said Ulric, but I cannot read writing. That does not matter, said the master; bring the paper to me, we can see what is in it, and to-morrow you will still be free to act as you will. But do you not really think that I shall lose anything? We shall see, said the master; if you will believe in me this time, and not be mistrustful, I will promise to help you out; if you would rather believe others, do so, and you will see the result. I told you beforehand the course things would take. I know well you have heard suspicion cast upon me; you have been told that I was tyrannical and selfish, and that I grudged my people enjoyment. It was not right of you, Ulric, to believe such things! You might have known me better, and you really deserve that I should leave you now to get out of your difficulties as you can. But I say to you plainly, if you are so mistrustful another time, so ready to believe and follow any rascal who chooses to slander me, then we must be parted for ever. I cannot be a father to you, unless you trust me and show towards me the confidence of a son.

Ulric acknowledged that he had acted very wrongly and very foolishly, but said he had not believed that men were like that. What! said the master, not that men were like that! You readily believed that I was a bad master and wished to wear you out for my own advantage, you believed that one who showed his goodwill by his deeds was bad, and that they who spoke to you fair and flattered you were good, though they had never done a hand's turn for you! Then you say, like the rest, you could not have believed men were so bad! That is an unreasonable speech. It is you who cannot distinguish good from bad; you have a natural leaning towards those who mislead you, and a natural disinclination towards those who direct you for your good. You are like many others who would rather credit any worthless scamp than the best of masters! Believe me, those who have to manage men and maid-servants have no easy time of it!

The master, contrary to his custom, had spoken warmly. Ulric begged him not to be angry, and assured him that if it were really as he had said, he would have full confidence in him, and put no more trust in those rascals.

Ulric went to Farmer Boden quite early in the morning and told him he thought he must be a magician; all had happened so exactly as he said it would. They had almost eaten him up with love and kindness, now and then one had tried to frighten him, and at last they had promised him five hundred gulden. He had agreed, and asked for the promise in writing. They had argued with him, saying this was quite unnecessary; then Resli had said they might as well give it to him, he

should write it himself, if he was so determined to have it. He had said he could not write; Resli had then drawn it up, and two had signed in the name of all. They had given him the paper with him, but charged him not to show it to any one, or it might spoil all, but they had exchanged meaning glances, and each had a queer expression of face as he read it.

Well! would you like to hear it? said the farmer. And he read,

"Last Sunday there was ill-will at the hornet match, followed by hard fighting. Farmer Boden's servant confesses that he alone is responsible for the hurts received. This is vouched for, and witnessed to, for themselves and each other, by the undersigned,

JOHN FURFUSS,
BENEDICT HEMMLISCHILT."

Ulric turned first red and then pale, doubled up his fists and shouted, The rascals! the rascals!

Now, said John, who is to be believed?

Stop, master! said Ulric, Resli shall be paid out. I will break every bone of his body!

That would do a great deal of good! you would fall out of the frying-pan into the fire.

But what *shall* I do? said Ulric; I cannot take it quietly.

Go to your work and leave the paper with me. I will manage it; it is best to make no noise about it; it could do no good to either side; it would only be food for the vultures who devour their neighbour's reputation.

When the master had calmly breakfasted, he strolled into Resli's farm, and found him picking up fallen apples; he congratulated him on the number and fruitfulness of his trees. He went on a few steps, then returned and said, By the bye, I must not forget to tell you that Ulric has changed his mind, the paper you have drawn up does not suit him. Resli bent towards the apples, and said, He must please himself, but he had better mind what he is about. O yes! said his master, I only wish to warn you to leave him alone; it will be better for you to arrange amongst yourselves, and not ask one kreutzer of Ulric, than that he should show that paper to the magistrate. To this Resli made no answer, but said, John, I should be glad if you would keep your hedge in better order, your sheep are always in my orchard, and if one of them is choked by an apple, it will not be my fault.

The gaps shall be mended to-day, said John, and they would have been mended before, if we had had time; you must not take it amiss. No, said Resli, but it seems to me that the hedge has been out of order a very long while. Yes, it may be so, said John, but you know, Resli, if there had not been this hurnuss business, many good things would have been done, which have been left undone, and many discreditable things would not have been attempted.

The tobacco got into Resli's windpipe, and made him cough. John returned home, and told Ulric that he would have nothing to pay.

CHAPTER VII

HOW THE MASTER FOSTERS THE GROWTH OF THE GOOD SEED

"The first duty of every man in the world is to find his true master, and, for his own good, submit to him; and to find his true inferior, and, for that inferior's good, conquer him."—*Cestus of Aglaia*, § 82.

So Ulric had a great escape. It is true that he regretted the money he had lost and the clothes he had destroyed, but he had gained experience as to who were his friends and who were his enemies. He now understood that those who tempt others into the broad way are moved by an evil spirit, and that they are of God who invite others into that narrow path which is so hard in the beginning, and so glorious in the end. He therefore did not lose heart, but continued to work and to save; he exercised self-control and self-denial, and did not rest until he had made up what he had lost. It is well when this is the case, as nothing is more discouraging than having to begin again at the beginning. Most men, when they have given back a time or two in the attempt to ascend a mountain rapidly, abandon the effort altogether. If horses begin to draw a waggon and fail, through the unskilfulness of their driver, they pull less and less each time, and then do not try. It is so with all progress and change for the better, and especially with the effort to save money.

Ulric kept his ground, however, notwithstanding many temptations. In the dark evenings and during the winter Sundays, when he did not know what to do with himself, he felt strongly inclined to go to one of those places of resort for young men where they begin to play innocently for nuts, but go on to play for brandy, and end in guilty excess.

Many farmers have no warm room to which the men-servants are made welcome, and where they are allowed to employ themselves comfortably and profitably; they have, in consequence, to thank themselves for many bad servants. The sleeping rooms at the top of the house are cold and dark, and very scantily furnished, and the men-servants are not generally allowed in the living room with the family. They go into it when they are called to a meal, and they are expected to go out when they have done. If they remain, the mistress looks askance at them, or she asks the master to tell them their tobacco is too strong, or else they are simply told *that* is not their place, they must go elsewhere. It is a little better for the maids; if there are not apples or potatoes to prepare for the next day, they spin with the mistress in the evenings. But on Sunday afternoons they are glad, in many places, to be rid of them also, and many a farmer's wife has urged a girl to be off, remarking that when *she* was young nothing could ever keep her at home on a Sunday!

Any reasonable person may understand how brutalized men must become, who, through the whole year, have no culture of their higher nature, who are banished to the stable, or to the company of those who, like themselves, have no chance of spending a quiet hour in reading or writing, in a warm and lighted room. Such men lose all taste and desire for anything which can instruct and improve the mind and heart; here and there they play harmless games, but they generally sink to the lowest pleasures and the most brutal sensuality. Even those who do not regard Sunday as the Lord's Day, would shudder to see all the immorality of the serving class in these unoccupied hours. Many otherwise sensible persons are never weary of deploring the wickedness of servants, their folly and their stupidity; yet they banish them to holes which they would think unfit for their favourite dogs. If one remarks to them that those who live like cattle cannot be much better than cattle, they say they cannot arrange otherwise, the house-rents are too high, or the wood for a sitting-room fire is too expensive. Be it so; but then they must put up with such servants as they themselves help to make.

This bad state of things is increasingly prevalent in towns also. The houses are large and showy, but the servant-accommodation is poor and scanty; there is no longer the little sitting-room where serving-men and maids can find a free place at a table, books, especially the Bible, and writing materials. Those who are not treated with humanity become less and less human; the evil brings its own punishment, and who can wonder that such householders never have good servants?

One Sunday the master saw Ulric standing under the eaves of the roof, in a state of painful indecision, as if he could neither make up his mind to stay in or to go out. He said to him at last, What is the matter? Are you nailed there so that you cannot move? No, master, said Ulric, but I am almost pulled in two; something draws me out, and something else holds me back, and neither gets the master of the other, so that I am spell-bound. I wish somebody would help me either in or out! I am so cold that I can scarcely feel my feet. The master laughed and said he must explain this to him; it was a queer thing.

Oh! master, said Ulric, I am dreadfully dull, and I do not know what to do with myself. I thought I should like to go into company a little, but I only know of one place, and I know how things go there, and the state I might come home in—then I thought I had better stay here. But what can I do? I cannot go to bed, and I should be no better off in the stable, and round about the house the wind blows enough to take the buttons off one's clothes! Master, what shall I do?

You are a foolish fellow, said the master; can you not go into the great room? There the stove is warm, the wind does not blow, and if you were to read a chapter in the Bible it would not hurt you. Yes, said Ulric, but I was not sure that I was quite in place there. I tried it once, and I seemed to be in every one's way!

That would be a joke, said the master; if it is right for me it must be right for others; come in! Ulric followed with some hesitation, and he moved about as if he was paying a visit of ceremony and scarcely knew where to sit. He placed himself at last at the lower end of the table, and the master gave him a Bible, and showed him some other

books upon the cupboard, which he might read if he liked. Ulric began to read, but it was soon evident that the maid-servants did not want him there; one wished to place a bowl of water just where he had the Bible, and, after he had moved, another wanted to iron a habit-shirt exactly where he was; when he went still further off they said his legs were in the way, and they could not get to and from the table conveniently. Then Ulric began to assert himself and to say he had as good a right to be there as they had; the master himself had invited him in, and there was surely as much room on the table for the Bible as for their finery. The maids said they should like to know what the master had to do with it; they had had the table to themselves ever since they came. It would be droll if the master were to introduce new customs, and they were to have the smell of stable-clothes all the afternoon: it was quite enough to have it at meals. The master could not order anything of the kind! Ulric said he thought the master had quite as much to do with it as his own serving-maids, and he knew that his clothes did not smell of the stable like those of some others which they did not object to!

At the sound of high words the mistress came out of the little parlour, and said she had no chance of taking up a book on work-a-days, and she ought to have a quiet time on Sundays, so that she might read a chapter of the Bible in peace. When she was settled for this duty she was disturbed by their quarrelling; formerly servants had known what manners were! Pardon me, said Ulric, who well understood the hint, I should not have come in if the master had not invited me, but I can go again. Oh, stay, Ulric, said the wife, when she had heard about the master, I did not tell you to go, but you can be quiet together; when I want a little reading, I cannot do with quarrelling.

The strife ceased, but Ulric was not very much at his ease, and he was glad when it was time to go and fodder the horses.

Then the master, who had been for a walk, came in, and asked him how he had spent his afternoon. Pretty well, said Ulric, the Bible was pleasanter reading than he expected, but he did not rightly know, only it seemed to him he ought not to be in the great room. Did any one tell you to go out? asked the master. Oh no, not exactly, said Ulric, but I could feel it without that.

John did not inquire further. When he went in his wife said she would like to ask him, only he must not take it amiss, why he took it into his head to allow men-servants in the great room on Sunday afternoon; they had never done so; where could they go themselves if any visitors came? They could not talk before a roomful of servants. In summer they could go into the parlour, but in winter it was too cold, and the front room was much brighter because of its sunny aspect.

John listened seriously, and then said, Now, wife, hear what I have to say, and do not take it amiss either. I will tell you what I did; during my walk I have considered the subject, and it seems much more important than I thought it at first. Then he related how he had happened to see Ulric and invite him in, out of pity, that he might warm himself; how he then realised, for the first time, the hard case of a farm-servant who is driven into bad company because he has nowhere to go. He cannot take up a book or write a letter; he forgets all

that he learned at school; and when, in later life, he wants to undertake any little business, or has children of his own, he can scarcely read print, much less writing. He has no wholesome exercise of the mind, and he forgets that he is a reasonable creature. Besides, he added, I have often noticed that when men-servants go out they come back with their heads turned, and they set themselves up in opposition and are as provoking as possible. So I have been thinking if we could keep them at home, without any constraint or obligation, and if they learned to be more sensible and to consider their own true interest, how happy it would be for them and for us!

Oh, John, said his wife, do stop and take breath; you are like our preacher, who talks too much by half. I do not like to begin a new fashion; and where are *we* to be? Are we to have no quiet corner to ourselves for a confidential word which we have no time for in the week?

John thought they had always the little parlour, or they might warm the back room on Sundays.

But what would people say, said his wife, if we were to begin a new fashion?

Oh, child, said John, if you mind what people say you will do little, new or old. Do what you will, you cannot escape people's tongues; and it is with them as with dogs, they come off the worst who are the most afraid of them.

But, John, do you not think of your children? They would be always with the servants, and you know well how much harm they would learn. God forgive me, it is just as if the devil urged them to say the most wicked things before them!

But, wife, said John, you cannot avoid the children being with them; if they do not find them indoors, they follow them to the stable. You cannot always keep them in; just now I found two of them with Ulric. Now, they will certainly learn less harm in the great room in our hearing, and if the servants employ themselves sensibly. I would rather the children were with them than outside in the road, for they generally come in as if they had been pulled through thorn hedges or rolled in the mud.

The wife, though she had still a great deal to say, gave in at last, and John introduced the new custom that his servants should have a warm, light place to sit in on Sunday afternoons and on leisure evenings. Still, it was rather a shock to her when two lights became necessary. When she saw John light a second lamp just for the servants to read the almanac, it almost took away her breath. In many houses they had to go to bed without a light, and now John gave them one just for their amusement! It seemed as if he had not common-sense! However, she became accustomed to it, and the longer it was done, the better she liked it, until it gave her actual pleasure.

The servants soon learned that there was always a place for them on Sunday afternoons; they sat by the stove, or more generally, at the table: one read, another practised himself in writing or in reckoning; they helped each other, or agreed to refer a difficulty to the master. Sometimes, if they came to a hard word, one of the little boys must ask the teacher the meaning of it the next day. The children took part in all, and were highly delighted if they could teach anything to a grown-up man, or if it

was remarked, Johnnie is so clever, there will soon be nothing more for the schoolmaster to teach him! And pleasure was not the only result; the farmer's wife was obliged to admit that the children had never learned so much in any previous winter; also that she had very little trouble with them, and she always knew where they were.

The servants also changed for the better; they quarrelled less, and they were more satisfactory in every way. They had now something good to think of; they were not always cherishing imaginary grievances, turning over slanders in their minds, or dwelling on evil pleasures and low desires. Better thoughts and feelings began to grow up in their hearts, and just as hunger returns with bodily health so they began to hunger and thirst after God's truth and God's worship. They went sometimes to a preaching or a catechising, and on their return knew how to relate, not only what they had seen, but what they had heard, and to tell the text and subject of the discourse. They talked seriously at table, and whoever wished to turn such matters into jest, was immediately checked by the others.

The Sunday afternoons passed quickly to all, and when it struck four o'clock, no one, not even the mistress, could believe that it was so late. It even occurred to her to make coffee sometimes for the assembled party, without once thinking how people would talk if she provided it for men and maids at an unusual hour!

It was not long before it was known in the neighbourhood that Farmer Boden had his men and maids in the pleasant living-room on Sunday afternoons, and abuses crept in which would soon have spoiled all. Young men made excuses to go and see the girls, maid-servants strayed in; it became a meeting-place and a scene of idleness and disorder. The farmer could not allow this, and though a peasant dislikes nothing more than giving to the servants of others a reproof which is sure to be taken amiss, John had to do it this time. He said he did not wish to forbid his house to any one, but he could not have it a place of general meeting, and that those who did not wish to conduct themselves properly, must go elsewhere. A few words were sufficient. Some of the men looked impudent, and some of the maids tossed their heads, but that did not much signify to Farmer Boden.

CHAPTER VIII

AS SOON AS A MAN HAS MONEY, HE IS SURROUNDED BY SPECULATORS

"Avarice is a quite natural passion, and, within due limits, healthy. The addition of coin to coin, and of cipher to cipher, is a quite proper pleasure of human life, under due rule."—*Fors Clavigera*, Letter 62, § 8.

During the whole winter Ulric spent so little money, and wore out so few clothes, that he was quite astonished. He had been only once inside an inn, and then the master had sent him and treated him, so that he might not quite forget what it was like. For the first time in his life he quitted an inn after a very small reckoning, and in full possession of his senses; he told the master, as they returned together, that he had not believed such a thing was possible.

This experience raised him very much in his own eyes, and as he went home, conversing sensibly with the farmer, the thought crossed his mind that perhaps he might one day go out of an inn as a master. He dreamt the whole night of farms, and of sacks of money to buy them with. Sometimes he tottered under their weight, and sometimes he could not find them at all. Then a beautiful maiden beckoned to him, and he could not move to follow her; his shoes dropped off, or his legs were tied together. At last the maiden disappeared, and an old woman with a besom drove him out of a hemp plantation; he wanted to run away and could not, and he awoke himself by crying out. This dream took great hold of his mind, and if he had not been ashamed he would have gone to a fortune-teller to have it explained to him. It was singular that after a good night's rest, and a good breakfast, he always thought the dream meant something wonderfully good; but when he was tired and hungry no one could have persuaded him that it did not mean ruin and misfortune!

In the meantime things went well with him, he worked as diligently at his master's business as if it had been his own, and felt that he was becoming quite another man by the habitual exercise of faithfulness and industry. He recalled the time when he thought it a shame to be a good, true servant, and a glory to outwit the master, to eat too much and to work too little.

He now made it a point of honour not to draw any of his wages before the end of the year; he was convinced that a man ought to limit his expenditure to the wages he had received, because future earnings belong to the future. He knew also that the future is uncertain, and that health may fail, so that it is wise and right to lay by for the days of which a man says, I have no pleasure in them.

It was a proud moment for Ulric when, on Christmas Day, his master called him into the little parlour, counted out his thirty crowns, and laid beside them a new thaler as a gift. The strong fellow's hand trembled when he stretched it out, because he had never before had so much money at once; and the tears came into his eyes when the master praised him, and told him he would make a fine man if he persevered in right ways.

The next thing with Ulric was what he should do with his money; he wanted clothes, especially shirts, but he could put aside a third, if not half, of his wages. He said he could not have believed how far thirty crowns would go with proper management; he had never thought money would hold together in this way, it used to be done directly, like a cartful of bought hay, but this was like a good store laid in at home! The farmer laughed at his expansiveness, but the wife was touched by it, and said when the sempstress came she would have a shirt made for him for a Christmas present. Ulric thought the master had done too much for him already, and that he ought rather to be paid an apprentice's fee for all that he had taught him. But if he might ask a favour, would she be so good as to buy him linen for three more shirts? He had better get a little stock and not always be putting his hand in his pocket; he did not understand linen, and was always taken in: not long since he had had shirts which were like cobwebs. The farmer's wife said she would do her best for him, but she was not sure she should succeed, weavers and traders were almost too cunning for her nowadays.

Perhaps she had some herself, said Ulric, and would sell him the quantity he required. Yes, I could, but I will not, said the mistress. I have always had vexation when I have done so. Servants are the best customers to the pedlars, who sell them things which no sensible person will buy. If a farmer's wife sells a servant anything, it is a signal to pedlars, tailors, and sempstresses to alight like sparrows on a field of millet, and say they could have bought it cheaper elsewhere, and if she had been able to use it, she would not have parted with it. Such people regard transactions with servants as their own exclusive privilege, and they do not mind what they say to make them suspect their employers. The tailor says the cloth will not hold the stitches, the sempstress says the linen comes into holes under her fingers, and they exclaim that it is too bad to give poor wages to begin with, and then to take good money for worthless articles. I know, indeed, there are master people who deceive their servants, and take off from their hardly-earned wages, but there are few of that kind. So, Ulric, I will use our linen for ourselves, and see if I can buy some as good for you, so that no pedlar can grumble, and no tailor can be suspicious.

Ulric often contemplated his treasure, and had great delight in it. It was an attraction to others also, like a honey-pot to wasps. Those who love money, without the trouble of earning it, have an eye on a young man in his circumstances. One wants to borrow a batz for a packet of tobacco, and another, five batzen, because he does not happen to have any change by him. Hans might get a watch almost for nothing, but he is just one thaler short; one of the maids wants to buy a splendid blue handkerchief from a man from Aargau, who, having slipped into the

house, passes off his cotton wares as silk. Ulric must lend her thirteen batzen, because she does not like to ask the mistress. The shoemaker, who is at work in the house, is in absolute need of four crowns, and vows to return them at Easter, with a fifth crown as interest. The flax-hechler,* who soon came on his rounds, wanted four large thalers: he was making a good investment in flax, and Ulric should share the profit. This pleased Ulric mightily; he had visions of glittering gold. He thought it would be foolish to have his money in a chest, while he could make such good use of it. These investments, he thought, were much better than little loans of one or two batzen, which would bear no interest. Now he could say he had no more money, he had lent it all! it was quite a weight off his shoulders. But he thought the master need not know about it, perhaps he would have liked the investment for himself. He had confidence in the farmer, but there was this little remnant of the old mistrust; and very few servants like to tell their masters what money they have, or to confess what they do with it.

Easter came, and the shoemaker brought—no money, but a good excuse. He had a large custom and had to lay out a great deal for material, but he would pay interest according to the time. Ulric tried to reckon how much a week he would have to give him, but with all his efforts he could make nothing of it. Michaelmas came, and he had not seen his four crowns again.

The flax-hechler was also unfortunate; flax had gone down instead of up, so he thought it better to keep back half of what he had until he could sell it more profitably; the other half he had delivered on credit to a pedlar, whose name he had forgotten. He had taken great pains to find him again at fairs and markets, but always, so far, without success.

Ulric became very uneasy; he would gladly have given up the interest, if only he could have got hold of his money again. As often as he asked for it they tried to put him off with new excuses, and when he became angry, they said they would give it to him if they had it; they could not strike it out of the stones all in a minute. If he saw any way of taking it, he must take it by all means. If they had known how impatient he was, they would not have had anything to do with him.

The thought of losing so lightly his hardly-earned money, without anything to show for it, vexed and tormented Ulric so much, that he could neither eat nor sleep. Formerly, when he drank away his money, he at least knew what he was doing; now that he had saved and economised he was worse off than ever. It was ordained that he should be unfortunate. Now he knew the meaning of his dream, and the sack of money which he could never find again!

The master could not understand what was the matter with him. At last he thought he must be ill; he could see no other cause for his strange behaviour. However, he waited awhile; then, finding that there was no improvement, he asked Ulric what was the matter. At first Ulric said he was afraid to tell him. The master replied, he might be silent if he chose, but he thought he had deserved his confidence; so Ulric told him his trouble, related how his savings were scattered to the winds, how

* Flax-heckler, one who heckles or combs flax.

his rejoicing had changed to despair, and how he feared that he should never recover one kreutzer.

You should have thought before acting, said the master. Many servants do not know how to manage their money, and they get cheated in this way. I do not meddle unless I am asked. They would only think I had some interested motive, or that I liked to rule and order. I am sorry for you, but you really might have known what sorts of birds you had to deal with in the shoemaker and the flax-hechler. But I will tell you how it was, Ulric; the demon of avarice tempted you. Do you know, the shoemaker promised not less than a hundred per cent., while honest people generally give only four? and the flax-hechler also threw dust in your eyes. Simple people are caught in this way, but they might know that when people make such great promises, they do not mean to keep them.

Ulric said he saw that very well now, but he would like to know if the master could help him to his money again, *he* saw no way of getting it. John shook his head, but undertook the commission, and in the end recovered more than might have been expected, as neither shoemaker nor flax-hechler cared to lose his custom.

When he was giving the money to Ulric he said, You keep it, master: I do not want it, and if I had it, I should not keep it long. I am unlucky with money; either I spend it, or some one takes me in, and if no one were to get it I believe the mice would eat it.

No, said the farmer, I have enough to do to take care of my own, though it is not much. You must put it into the savings-bank. What is that? asked Ulric. The bank is a place where you may lay by money until you require it, and in time you get a reasonable interest; and it is so safe that you have nothing to fear. That is very convenient, said Ulric, but can one put in at any time, and is it not known who has money there? You can put it in and take it out at your pleasure. And for my part, I do not think it hurts a young man for it to be known that he has money at interest; on the contrary, I think it gains for him a certain amount of consideration. Then there is no occasion to take any trouble about the interest; it is added each year at the rate of four per cent. So you may double your capital in twenty years. This is by far the best place for money; you can put in as little as you like, at any time; you are safe from swindlers and cheats, and you can truthfully tell those who wish to borrow, that you have no money by you. Then Ulric reproached the master for not telling him this before; if he had known it, he might have avoided all this trouble.

I repeat to you, the master said, that I cannot treat you as a child unless you absolutely desire it; then you must have confidence in me, and be quite open about everything, and ask advice, as a son would of a father.

Ulric acknowledged himself in fault, and begged the master to put his fifteen thalers into the savings-bank, remarking that though they would be safe they would not bear much interest. That is how you look at it, is it? said the farmer. It is just this impatience which is the ruin of many. Those who find the right way too slow, become spendthrifts or rogues. Wait only a few years, keep adding to your savings, and you will see what a nice little capital you will have.

CHAPTER IX

ULRIC RISES IN IMPORTANCE, ESPECIALLY IN THE EYES OF SERVANT-MAIDS

"Protective watchfulness of his master's interest and credit, or joyful readiness to seize unexpected and irregular occasions of help."—*Unto this Last*, § 9.
"The lower grotesqueness of peasant nature."—*Fors Clavigera*, Letter 34, § 10.[1]

Ulric continued to follow his master's advice, and became more and more clever and industrious. He increased in wisdom and understanding, and in favour with God and man. The change in his habits was quite perceptible in his appearance: he held up his head like a man, and it was evident that he was no mean fellow. He was often taken for a farmer's son, not only on account of his good clothes and his silver watch and chain, but because of his good bearing and sensible behaviour. The farmers were glad of a talk with him, and often asked his opinion. He did not give it carelessly: the feeling that he was looked upon as a responsible person made him weigh his words. People quoted them with the remark, Farmer Boden's Ulric said so, therefore we may depend upon it.

He felt himself no longer a poor servant-lad who was not wanted anywhere; he had a place in the world, and he was worth something to others, who looked upon him with due favour.

All this came to pass gradually, and it would be tedious to relate the separate causes of the happy result. He discovered faults in the horses which his master wished to buy; he made use of favourable weather during his absence; he considered his interest so as to save him from loss in many ways. He also began to feel that a man who possesses something of his own, looks at things with quite different eyes; he knows the value of property, and satisfies his employers by his careful use of all that is entrusted to him. A man who has savings feels a certain assurance (which often, unfortunately, degenerates into silly pride); he has earned a provision for future years; he can look forward without fear; he is no longer the sport of every wind of fortune, or absolutely dependent on the will of others. He can bear a few weeks of illness, or wait for a while for a suitable place, and he does not move about as if he were in a wasp's nest; because peace of mind, and honest satisfaction in daily life and effort, give him a cheerful temper, which is pleasantly felt by all about him.

But this respectable position brings its own peculiar difficulties, just as each flower has its insect, and each fruit its grub. The reputation of being a saving man is an attractive bait to girls who wish to be well settled in life.

[1] [Where the reference is to a story of Gotthelf's there translated (Vol. XXVII. p. 632).]

The farmer had two women-servants, the upper and under maid. The first was peevish, and did not give three good words in a year; she was marked with small-pox, had hairy warts on her face, red eyes, and white lips; she was, in short, exceedingly ugly to look at. On the other hand, she was managing and industrious, and a steady husband would be quite to her mind; only she showed her affection by grumbling and growling, and the more she liked any one, the more snappish and disagreeable she became. She said it would be worth her while to work and to save when she had a husband; she should see that no one could surpass her in frugality and thrift.

The other was a slight, silly girl, with a pink and white complexion, a pretty little mouth, and sparkling eyes. She liked to deck herself out, was not fond of work, had no idea of management, and only wished for an easy life. A husband represented to her happiness, fortune, and all that the world could bestow. She was all sweetness and smiles; she knew well how to make herself agreeable and caressing, like a cat in a good humour. She thought if she once had a husband, she would love him dearly, and all would be well. Nothing should induce her to remain in service; she would cook what she liked, and do as she pleased.

Each turned her eyes towards Ulric and wished to make him happy. He pleased both; the first thought she would like to help him to save, the second that his earnings would enable her to live in idleness and gratify her fancies.

Stini scolded Ulric for wasting a sulphur match to light his pipe in the kitchen; he might have taken out a coal, his hands were not too delicate, she supposed; and she snapped at him every time he wanted oil. If he overfilled his lantern, and let a drop run over, she told him he must learn economy in a different fashion! His leather shoes might stand a week in the kitchen before Stini would clean them. She hoped thus to keep him at home, and she told him wooden shoes were good enough for a farm-servant to tramp about in. When he and others sat resting on the bench before the house, after the labours of the day, Stini would drive them off to bed, and remark to Ulric that it was no wonder he was so lazy in the morning, and good for nothing all the day!

Stini talked of him continually to the mistress, but always to blame and find fault with him: nothing that he did was right. The mistress often replied, Really, Stini, I do not know what you can have against Ulric; he does no one any harm, he is one of the finest young fellows possible: where would you see a better?

Ursi set to work very differently; she flirted and flattered, and put herself forward; she wanted help from Ulric, or offered him hers; she made excuses to follow him, she put on her most bewitching looks, she teased him into playing with her: she would steal his pocket-handkerchief, or take a feather out of his hat, or slip nice apples or pears into his pockets. She said even, sometimes, she would like a husband, and she certainly would make him happy; people had only one lifetime, and it was silly, she thought, to embitter that one with cross words and stingy ways.

Womanly instinct told these two that they were rivals, and they accordingly did their best to cut each other out.

Stini raged against the folly of men, who admire any simpleton who

happens to have a pretty face; told Ulric he was just one of that sort, and that no sensible girl would care to take up with him. He was just the one to be caught by a chit like Ursi, and there would be a fine rod in pickle for him! As for herself, if she had not a delicate complexion which the sun would spoil, she had a good stock of linen, plenty of stockings, and four bodices, two of which were new, and enough of money besides, (if she *did* set up housekeeping with any one,) for two beds, a couple of cows, and, perhaps, a sheep. That would not be like marrying a girl who thought of nothing but finery and had no notion of economy! But she thought she should remain single; long ago she had had opportunities of marrying, but now not one man in a hundred but preferred a simpering doll to a capable wife with a good bit of money!

While she spoke, she looked sour enough to turn the milk.

Ursi was not half so bitter about Stini, but she made spiteful remarks about her clothes and her habits; said they did not matter to her as fellow-servant, but as a wife such ways would be unpleasant; and added that she had good reasons for not eating anything when Stini cooked instead of the mistress.

The two rivals, who abused each other when they were apart, did not spare each other when they were together; and Ulric, wise as he had grown in many ways, could not yet perceive that neither of these women would be a right wife for him, and could not help being flattered and gratified by seeing himself the object of so much consideration. In questions of marriage, most men have their eyes bandaged, even those who are clear-sighted enough on other subjects; and while every one can predict to them that they will be unhappy as surely as two and two make four, they themselves do not see it until they have taken the irrevocable step. Ulric liked a pretty and pleasant girl better than an ugly, repulsive one, but he was so possessed by the idea of advancing himself, that the prospect of a thrifty wife, with a few hundred crowns, had a strong attraction for him.*

Certainly she was very plain, but one gets used to that, and one does not think of it after a while; besides, all men cannot marry beautiful wives, and many would change the most lovely women in the world for the plainest, if they were less expensive and more industrious.

Ulric was the more convinced that it was time to make up his mind, that he was getting old, and if he did not decide soon, he thought no one would marry him. It is true that in these days little boys fancy themselves men, and people get old sooner than they used to do formerly. It would once have been thought imprudent for a man to marry before he was thirty years of age, but girls now prefer a downy-bearded youth of eighteen or twenty. This gives an idea of the way in which they are accustomed to look at marriage and its responsibilities. Parents who are themselves children are not the most likely to fulfil their important duties.

But if Ulric was anxious to arrive at a decision, the two aspirants were

* The reader is by this time, I hope, prepared for the microscopic pains of watching the gradual change in Ulric which is the ostensible subject of the book. Change, not from coarse material to fine, but from a log of nearly dead timber to a healthy young sapling. He never becomes a hero: men who have the make of heroes in them do not care for money in youth—nor marry for it at any time.

still more so, and each redoubled her efforts to carry off the prize. If he was milking or foddering, if he was in the grass or amongst the manure, he was sure to see the sudden arrival of Stini or Ursi. If it was Stini, Ursi was not far off; and if Ursi had stolen a march in advance, Stini appeared to rise out of the earth; she would neglect everything, and even let the milk boil over, rather than leave any advantage to her rival. They were not sparing of abuse to each other at these meetings, and each threatened that she would complain of the other to the master, because such scandalous conduct ought not to be allowed in any house. The farmer and his wife saw this state of things with a growing dissatisfaction, for the two maid-servants seemed to have lost their senses. Ulric's work was neglected, and they lived in a state of continual forbearance. The mistress thought John ought to speak to Ulric; she had already reprimanded the maids many times, and it had been like pouring oil into the fire: they had become more violent every day, and she thought Stini would lose her senses; she had lately made a loud crying and sobbing, which she had never done before since she had known her. Ursi did not take it so much to heart; she thought if she had not this one, she would get another. Ulric had not confided his difficulties to his master, and John held back, but he considered that he must do something soon; things could not go on in this vexatious manner.

However, an incident occurred which set matters right, without any intervention on his part.

Ulric's situation became embarrassing; his eagerness for marriage began to cool, and he was rather ashamed of the attentions of his two sweethearts.

One evening when he was in the stable foddering the horses, Ursi arrived, asking him with a pitiful air what was the matter, and why he was changed towards her. She was sure Stini was at the bottom of it, but she knew how to pay her out! As she said these words, they heard a strange noise outside, a heavy fall into something liquid, then a struggling and splashing, and smothered cries and groans. Ursi jumped for joy, and said, She is in! she is in! Then she went out quickly, followed by Ulric with his lantern, while the other inhabitants of the house hastened out likewise in alarm! What a sight awaited them! The unhappy Stini, who in her jealous fury had rushed out to the stable in the dark, had fallen into the uncovered manure-pit.

She was in the most pitiful state imaginable; she struggled to get out, —but all in vain; no one offered to help her, no one liked to approach too near. The whole household formed a circle round her, hesitating as to what could be done. No one could help laughing; even the mistress had to turn away, lest she should compromise her dignity by laughing also. The poor creature stretched out her arms convulsively, raged at Ursi—and apparently not without cause—for removing the planks from the manure-pit, on purpose that she might fall in on her way to the fountain, and declared that she should suffer for it! At last the master took pity on her, laid hold of a pole three or four feet long, held it at one end, and gave Ulric the other. Stini took hold of this in the middle, and they drew her up slowly out of the pit, and placed her on firm ground, amid shouts of boisterous mirth. Ursi laughed louder than the rest, but not for

long. Stini sprang upon her like a hyena, and dragged her to the ground, and none cared to soil their clothes by attempting a rescue. At last the mistress, at the sound of approaching steps, said she would interpose herself if no one else would. Then the master ordered the two dirty creatures into the house in good earnest, and they had to recover themselves as best they could.

This scene finished their pretensions with Ulric. They felt that it was all over with them; both attacked and abused him, and their hatred promised to be as troublesome as their love. However, Stini consoled herself by the thought that, anyway, Ursi had not caught him, and Ursi thought to herself that a pretty girl can get a husband any day,—not that she would take just anybody!

Ulric still clung to the idea that it was time for him to marry, and that he ought not to delay.

(I have taken great liberties, in this chapter, with my translator's text, for which I ask her pardon, not her permission. As actors nowadays leave out as much of Shakespeare as they don't like,—so I leave out as much of Gotthelf as I don't like. But I put nothing of my own in, in place of it. Readers who are curious to know what I cancel, may learn German, and look.)

CHAPTER X

HOW ULRIC BARGAINS ABOUT A COW AND NEARLY GETS A WIFE

"No right thing can be accomplished—you can't even see your way to it—unless, first of all, both servant and master are resolved that, come what will of it, they will do each other justice."—*Crown of Wild Olive*, § 38.

The farmer sent Ulric to market to sell a cow for a certain sum, telling him that he might keep for himself what she fetched beyond that, but he must take care not to miss selling her, through asking too much, as he had done on similar occasions.

Ulric had taken much interest in the feeding of this cow, and he went to the fair with raised expectations, debating in his mind how much he might add to the reserved price. While he was still at some distance from the town, people passed him, and called out, What do you ask for the cow, young man? They examined her, handled her, said she was too thin, but began to bargain. Then others came, some praised, and others remarked that they might do worse, but added that there were lots of cows cheap.

Purchasers came about him like horse-flies at the entrance of a wood; they joked him, looked at his cow, and asked him what he had the face to ask for such a lean creature. Ulric began to suspect that cows were scarce, and that he might make a good hit this time. He asked five thalers more than the sum fixed by the master.

This was like throwing a stone into a wasps' nest; the bargainers made a great outcry, and went away hither and thither, as if quite frightened by such a price. But Ulric observed that some of them kept an eye on him, and noticed the spot in the fair where he placed himself with his cow. He called to an acquaintance to hold her for a moment, and slipped quickly through the market to see how prices were. He saw, to his delight, that he had not been mistaken, he might make something for himself to-day. When he returned he found his substitute quite at a loss, not knowing how to answer the buyers. Immediately he took up the business, he stuck to his demand; they offered, they bargained, they went away, and yet unwillingly made room for others. Finally, he abated one thaler and concluded the transaction, for fear of losing all purchasers by holding back too long. He delayed only until he had received the money, and the hottest afternoon sun was still burning when he started for home.

He had not proceeded far, when he saw before him the figure of a tall woman, who could not manage four little pigs, which she was trying to drive; one would straggle to one side and one to another, and while

she was making a rush after one, the others would escape. Pigs and driver were puffing and blowing, when Ulric came to the rescue. He recognised the daughter of a neighbouring farmer, who, breathless and exhausted, asked him, for goodness' sake, to help her, or she would never get the little beasts home. Ulric managed them easily; he had a more quiet and reasonable way with them; and animals are, as a rule, what their drivers make them. Here an excellent chapter might ensue for parents and rulers, but we have not time to give it them just now.

We must go on to relate that Katie used her recovered breath for Ulric's information, and found a great deal to say about the plenty and prosperity which reigned in her home. She told him how many pigs they had, how they fattened them with cream, how profitable they were, how their flax and hemp were still more so. They planted quantities every year, and they were so industrious in spinning, that they had rooms full of skeins of thread which quite astonished the merchants. Her mother had part of it woven, they had chests full of linen, an outfit for each child, and any amount of table and bed linen. And as to cattle, no one in all the country round had any to be compared to her father's.

"That is not all," continued Katie; "I have often stared to see the money the miller has paid him; he says he does not meet with such corn as ours every day. We have fields and fields of it, all as level as a plate, and such fine black mellow soil. It is a beautiful sight when the corn stands upright, as thick as a brush, all the ears of the same height, as if they had been cut with shears! People stand still to look at it, and say they do not know how my father manages it, all seasons alike!"

So Katie talked away until they arrived at an inn. It was no wonder she stopped for some refreshment, and thought it would do the pigs good to rest and have a drink. She proposed to treat Ulric to a bottle of wine, as she would never have got home without his help. Ulric said he had no objection to some wine, if she did not mind going to an inn with a farm servant, but he had money and would pay. Katie said he must be joking; she had been to inns with farmers' sons, who were less respected than he,—her father had praised him many a time, and said he wished he had such a man, and he knew many farmers' sons who would be less acceptable to him as a son-in-law even, than Farmer Boden's Ulric, though he was indeed but a servant!

There were not many people in the inn; those who want a regular meal and a dance do not go so early. There were only a few small farmers who had sold butter or thread, goats or pigs—the house-fathers and house-mothers of needy homes, who do not like to delay long, or to take much before they get their poor coffee at home. Some of this class sat in the parlour with their half-pints before them, their baskets or sacks beside them, and talked about the market and the prices. When some regretted having taken butter, because it fetched nothing, it was so plentiful, Katie boasted that her mother had known better than to send hers. Then she said to Ulric she would rather like something to eat, and if he would join her, they might ask the hostess what she could give them. He called her, and she said that if they would have a little patience, they might have roast meat, sausages, and ham, but nothing was

off the fire yet, they had not expected people so early. Katie was quite satisfied to wait, on account of the little pigs, (as she said,) and meanwhile it would get cooler. She had ample time for further diffusiveness on the advantages of her home. When the time came for settling the bill, she wished to pay the whole of it, but finally Ulric did so, as she did not wish to change her large coins at the inn.

I will repay you when we return, she said. I gave my father all my money, that it might not get mixed in paying for the pigs, but I have plenty at home. I can assure you that many people would be glad to change purses with me; my mother often says there are few farmers' daughters who have the pocket money that I have. Whenever we sell pigs, I get five batzen on each, and I make a good deal by fetching and carrying. For instance, I always take the meat to the parsonage; the former parson-lady used to give me five batzen every time, but this one only gives three, or three and a-half when the quantity is large. I have every year a field of flax all to myself, which has yielded me twenty-five pounds of thread, but my mother says that is only right, for there are not in the whole canton of Berne a dozen girls whose spinning-wheels go as fast as mine. My father also is very good to me; if he receives money when I am present, he does not put it away without giving me one or two new thalers—indeed I have known him go as high as a golden louis—saying that it is quite just, because he would have to give forty or fifty thalers to a servant who could turn his hand to everything as I can, and then he could not set him to spin in the winter, like me! He declares that, if he was young, he should be jealous of my skill in mowing; but what I understand best is sharpening the scythes; the men cannot make out how I do it: as soon as I take them in hand, I set them to rights. Then I am always up first in the mornings, and long after the servants are in bed, I set to work in the kitchen and help my mother to wash up, and to prepare the next day's breakfast. She says she wonders how I can stand it. Last summer, I carried so many sheaves of corn in one morning, that the man who had to load them turned faint, but I was not even tired. And you should have seen how our milker looked, when I milked two cows, while he was milking one! he said it would be a sad pity if I did not marry a cow-keeper; any one who got me for a wife would be lucky, there was not such another in the cantons of Berne or Lucerne. But papa said, with tears in his eyes, that he would not part with me, and that he would rather lose the best cow out of his stable. And then he went into the little parlour and brought out a handful of large thalers for me, and said he would not grudge me a whole apronful if I wanted them. Besides, we have four rich cousins in Aargau; whenever they come they bring me beautiful dresses and handkerchiefs. They make me presents of money, and there is no knowing how much they may leave us. They only regret that they have not a son, as they would be glad to see me settled amongst them; but my father would not like me to go so far away, and he says, if I will stay with him until we come in for the property, he will build me a fine house, and I shall live like a lady.

But Katie was not yet quite sure what she should do, she thought so industrious a girl would be dull, even in a grand house, with nothing to

do. Also she might find it lonely. If any one suitable offered, she might choose to marry; she had had many good chances, but she did not look for riches, she wished for some one handsome and kind, and if such an one offered, she would not keep him waiting for an answer. Her parents would not object, and they would prefer a son-in-law who lived with them to the richest husband who wished to take her away. They find that servants are always a trouble, she added, for, of course, they have never found one like you. Upon my word, I wonder how you can remain in service! A strong capable man like you, with money put by, might easily get a wife with means, and set up housekeeping on his own account.

Katie's volubility did not allow Ulric to put in a word; they came to where their ways parted, she thanked him for his help and said, I owe you eight batzen, and as I cannot bear to be in debt, come soon and fetch them. Then, when she and the little pigs had proceeded a few steps, she turned round and added, Come this evening and make sure. Are you in earnest? asked Ulric. Yes, upon my word! she replied.

Ulric did not know whether he stood upon his head or his heels, and a conflict of new ideas arose in his mind. Katie was a match worth thinking about. She was tall, very strong, and her large arms and feet seemed to betoken great power of work. Katie was the daughter of a farmer who owned a good deal of land. She had an immense quantity of money, besides what she would come in for from the Aargau cousins. And Katie was not proud; perhaps she would marry him—it certainly seemed as if he might gather so much!—and he would be a happy man who could secure such a treasure of industry.

He was walking on mechanically when the sight of the farm-house recalled him from the thoughts of Katie to the remembrance of the golden louis he had gained that day. It occurred to him that the master might regret fixing so low a price, and it might be better not to tell him all, but to speak only of three or four francs of profit for himself. There had been no witness of the sale of the cow, and the purchaser was a stranger. He would thus spare his master vexation; and the money rightly belonged to him before God and man! But, on the other hand, would not this be imposing on the kindness and confidence his master had shown in entrusting the business to him? If he had not wished to benefit him, he would have gone to the fair himself, and so experienced a farmer would have taken advantage of the opportunity at least as cleverly as *he* had done! He had come to no decision when he arrived at the house, and the master knocked for him at the window of the stübli, and beckoned him in there.

He passed into the domestic sanctuary with reverence; he had never entered it except to receive his wages, and on the memorable day of his master's serious reprimand. He seemed to pass the limits of a sacred enclosure, and to be prepared for something which mortal eyes had not yet seen. Here the inner life of the family is cherished in devout retirement, the husband and wife discuss freely the interests of the children, form their resolutions together, communicate their fears and hopes, their joys and sorrows, and compose those differences which are not allowed to disturb the harmony of the family.

How well it would be if there were such a sanctum in many grand houses! But people consider the size of the drawing-room, see if there is room for a chandelier, consult whether the old furniture will do or not; the husband and wife live *in* society, and *for* society. Many a marriage is only a company-piece; the actors are well-dressed, and placed in a handsomely furnished drawing-room, their weary faces light up as visitors are announced, they are all smiles and graces, they make happy eyes and piquant conversation, and all is well.

But they have no stübli, where, with loving hearts and lowered voices, hopes, anxieties, opinions, and beliefs are truly shared, truly understood, worked out, or patiently borne; where, in evil days, no forced smiles are needed, because two hearts, in communion with God and with each other, have a peace which passes understanding. Happy are they who do not despise such a refuge, and who make it indeed a holy place!

The farmer and his wife were seated quietly at the table, drinking coffee; he asked Ulric for an account of himself, and she—either of her own accord, or at a sign from her husband—gave him a cup also, saying, Sit down; the weather is warm, and you must be thirsty. Ulric said she was very kind, and it was not necessary; then sat down, and related all that had happened, from beginning to end. It would have been impossible for him, in that place, to swerve from the simple truth. He counted out all the money he had received, and handed it to the master; the farmer smiled, and the mistress said he had made a good business of it, she had not thought he was so cunning. They ate and drank together, then the master gathered up his money: he separated the overplus which he had promised Ulric, and gave it to him saying, That belongs justly to you.

Ulric said Yes! if it had been some small sum, but a louis is far too much, and I will not take it. You have gained it, said the master, and perhaps you would not have been so clever if you had not thought of profit.

I do not say that I will take nothing; but give me what you think reasonable—a whole louis is not to be thought of for a servant.

Women do not take in principles readily, especially when a louis is in question; they will willingly give it away in small sums, but it seems hard to let it go all at once.

Listen, said the mistress; if Ulric will be reasonable, do not be foolish. If you were to divide it, neither would have cause to complain. Look then, Ulric, you take two thalers, and you, John, put away the other two with your money, or some one will come, and laugh at your hesitation, and it will be put into next year's Almanac.

Ulric answered, I thank you; but it is too much.

He thought nothing about it at first; but afterwards he had a vague feeling that he had not been dealt with quite handsomely.

As to the master, he took up the money without expressing any sentiment of any kind.*

In the evening, after supper, John said to his wife that he would

* Bodenbauer, the reader begins probably now to feel, is the hero of the book; his wife, merely average Swiss type; kept even a little below its level in some things, for better light on the two heroines, when we come to them.

go out and see to Ulric. He had kept his Sunday clothes on, and he wondered if he was going to see Katie Hubeckbure; he would say a word to him about it. He found him, in fact, only waiting for an opportunity to slip away unobserved, and, stepping up to him, he gave him the other two thalers, saying, There, take what belongs to you. If you thought I would keep back what is not rightly mine, you did not know me.

Ulric again began to decline; but the master said, If it were ten louis instead of one, I must keep my word. Say no more about it. I am glad that you should benefit. But I did not wish to contradict my wife; we must give in to women a little. In such matters they have not the most just understanding, though their heart is always in the right place.

Ulric's heart beat high with joy on receiving the money, for he had never thought of gaining so much in a single day. Then he said to himself that his master was a fine man, and not one in a hundred would have acted as he had done. As he stood before him his courage rose, and he thought he would consult him about the subject which occupied his thoughts. He did not come to the point, however, until the master, after some indifferent conversation, said, It is time to go to bed. Good-night.

Good-night, master, said Ulric. But if it is the same to you, I should like to ask you something.

What is it? Speak.

I am thinking about Katie Hubeckbure. I do not suppose she would refuse me if I made her an offer. She is a wonderfully industrious girl, accustomed to all kinds of work, and she does as much as a farm-servant. Besides, it seems a wealthy house, and that would be good for a man who has not much. From the way Katie put it to me, I believe she would let me in, if I went, and I hesitate whether to go or not. You wish me well, and no one can advise me better than you.

What do you want with a servant? asked the master.

I do not want a servant, said Ulric; but I thought Katie would be a suitable wife for me.

Oh, indeed, said the master. The qualifications you mentioned were those of a farm-servant, not those one would look for in a wife. They occupy rather different positions. What good would it do you if your wife did farm-work and understood nothing of housekeeping? It would be so with Katie. She can mow, and load waggons, and work up to her knees in manure; but she cannot make a tasty soup. The daughters never do the cooking except when the mother is ill. If they can only use plenty of butter and eggs they think things must be good. The house is dreadfully ill-managed, and people do not get rich by disorder or extravagance. None of the girls can darn a hole. I question if one of them has ever had a needle in her fingers. Whatever Katie may say, the daughters will not get much; the property is in land, and that will go to the boys. I also have heard of the cousins in Aargau; but that is a mere bait to lead people by the nose. I really do not know where Hubeckbure can have cousins in Aargau. Those girls boast far too much: one thinks it must be needful; their mother did just the same. I was nearly caught by her, and I should have rued it bitterly. Just suppose they were to give you Katie; you would, as son-in-law, be simply an

unpaid servant for years and years. Or, if you set up housekeeping for yourselves, you would have to keep a maid-servant to do Katie's work, while she was treading the manure. Besides, she would never be satisfied, and if she did not waste the milk of four cows she would complain of stint and niggardliness. It could not be wise, in your position, to marry a farmer's daughter of this sort who has always lived in abundance; she would think herself badly off; she would continually be wanting a sempstress or a tailor. She would take it into her head to hold the plough sometimes, it is true, but you may imagine the state of the house while the mistress was out working on the land from morning to night. She would help at haymaking and harvest; but between times she would be an idle sloven. She would throw it at you two or three times a day that she had been happy in a plentiful home, and that she had brought herself to misery and poverty, when she might have married a wealthy farmer. Now, Ulric, do as you will; you have asked my opinion, and there it is.

Ulric had listened with great attention: he answered, I will go and take my Sunday clothes off. You have put farmers' daughters out of my head. And I see that, when a man wants a wife, he must not look for a servant. By such a marriage I should be a servant myself, and gain nothing but a lot of children and a bad wife. If you had not turned me from it, I should have had a worse handful than with Stini or Ursi. It is well to have some one near who is wiser than one's self.

Yes, said the master, it is well; but then he must be trusted and believed, or no good can result.

You are right, said Ulric; but I have sense enough now to tell you my affairs, and to take your advice. Thank you, master, for what you have said to me to-night.

I have advised you for the best, said the master; but do not repeat what I have told you.

Do not be uneasy, master, answered Ulric. I keep such things to myself.

CHAPTER XI

HOW A GOOD MAN UNDERSTANDS THE JUST DESIRES OF HIS SERVANT, AND FAVOURS THEM IN A DISINTERESTED MANNER

"Every man his chance? Nay, let us say, 'Every man his certainty'—certainty, that if he does well, he will be honoured and aided, and advanced in such degree as may be fitting for his faculty, and consistent with his peace."—*Crown of Wild Olive*, § 151.

So Ulric's ideas of marriage were set at rest for a time, and he became again the active, careful, zealous servant, who devoted his attention to his duties. His horses and cows were the finest to be seen far and near, and the master said the manure-heap was managed to perfection. For, said he, when any one has understanding, he can make the straw go twice as far as another. I have had servants to whom I have spoken of this in vain, they *would* go on in the way they said they had been used to. Much good may it do them! Nothing makes me more angry than these stupid fellows who know nothing and will learn nothing.

Ulric was also a first-rate waggoner. He drove his four horses gently and easily, and they drew a third more than others. He held the plough as well as an old farmer, and he could sow seed with the best. He could be trusted with the little seeds, clover, flax, etc., and the mistress said she could not tell the difference between his sowing and her husband's. John often said that things went on just the same whether he was at home or not, and remarked what a comfort it was to have a good, trustworthy man, instead of a blockhead, who had no mind for anything good.

The farmers would answer him, Yes! you can give the wages; we cannot afford such expensive servants. He told them that if they would reckon they would find that the cheapest servants are generally the dearest in the end.

They were not willing to admit this, and they were not singular. People are too apt to be attracted by the low price of an article, instead of considering its serviceableness.

So John was proud of his servant and raised his wages to forty thalers. Ulric, though he dressed well, was able to save quite half of this sum. He had nearly a hundred and fifty crowns in the Savings Bank, and he looked upon himself as a man of means. But the more people gain, the more they wish to gain. The desire for money grows with saving, just as appetite sometimes grows with eating. They become impatient for some way which will lead more rapidly to fortune. This malady of avarice attacked Ulric, and he could not rest without thinking of setting up for himself in some way, or changing to a situation with higher wages. He

thought he ought to have at least sixty crowns, or probably a hundred, as groom or ostler. Certainly, he should regret leaving Farmer Boden, all the family were so kind to him; but he said every one ought to look after his own interest.

The master perceived what was working in Ulric's mind, but he did not show any vexation. He was not one of those who think that a servant who has received kindness must, therefore, sacrifice himself by working all his life for wages which are not in proportion to his capacity. I do not speak now of the desire of most servants to make a change every year, in order to get one or two more crowns, without considering their own powers, the work that will be required of them, and the moral character and protection of the house to which they go.

It is true that a master is entitled to enjoy for some time the benefit of the improved servant; the good that he has done him has been, in one way, a payment of wages. But only to a certain extent. He must not be selfish; and if he cannot reward him suitably in his household, he must help to place him elsewhere; thus he wins his gratitude and secures a friend for life.

John did not see this quite clearly at first, and he felt annoyed to have borne with Ulric, instructed and improved him, just for him to leave when he was most valuable; but he checked the feeling, did not show it, and finally decided either to pay Ulric as much as he was worth, or to be content to part with him. So that he spoke without any resentment when Ulric, in his acquired confidence in his master, consulted him as to what he had better take in hand in order to better himself.

I understand, he said, that you cannot always stay with me. You are young, and you must make use of your youth. I cannot add much more to your wages, however profitable it might be to me to do so. But you cannot think of taking a business with your hundred and fifty crowns. Those who have not sufficient money in hand are always tied and hampered. They have to sell cheap for ready money, and buy dear on credit. They never succeed; they are always on the brink of ruin; they get into debt, and are finally overwhelmed. It is still worse with a little farm. I am always sorry when I see men set up in small holdings with insufficient means. When they have to use all the produce for their own living, how can they pay the rent? You have only money enough to buy stock, and how could you possibly get on? No; have patience, and a favourable opportunity may occur. And be sure I will think of you if I hear of a well-paid place, or anything likely to suit you. But do not go as ostler; it is not a calling which conduces to health of mind or body; there are many temptations to intemperance, and you would not advance towards an honourable future. I am grieved that we must part, but I do not complain. You have spoken candidly, and told me your intentions beforehand; and you have seen that I am entitled to your confidence. You will soon have been ten years with me, and I also have profited by your improvement in conduct and capacity. Depend upon it, if anything occurs, I will think of you. You will also look out for yourself, only let me know in good time if you are successful.

So master and man were frank with each other, and both were the better for it.

It was autumn, and the whole country presented a scene of rich abundance; the trees were laden with fruit, the meadows were full of cows. There were signs of life and activity everywhere, from the squirrels in the pear-trees to the busy troops of potato-diggers on the land; hunters abounded in the woods, and the wine-country was invaded by swarms of innkeepers.

John had brought his horses from the field; he was filling his evening pipe on the terrace, and disposed to enjoy it, while he was waiting for supper, on the bench in front of the house, when his wife came from the cellar, quite out of breath with the exertion of stowing away the abundant produce, and said, Really, John, I do not know what is to be done with the fruit. Our places are all filled up, and yet thousands of basketfuls are still hanging on the trees. You ought to dispose of it. It would be better to sell it for almost nothing than to let it rot. The good God has made it to grow, and somebody should have the benefit of it.

I have been thinking about it, wife, said John; it would not be right to let it waste. Will you go with me to the fair to-morrow? I have several things to do. I must see for a cow, find the butcher who has not paid me for the calf, and speak to a notary on affairs of the commune. I could, at the same time, look out for a distiller of vinegar or brandy who would take the fruit wholesale.

What can you be thinking of, John? How could I be away, even if we had not the tailors in the house? Could I leave them to help themselves to cloth and thread? That might do very well for them, but it would not do for me. My best day's work will be to stop at home. Besides, it would be a strange thing to leave the house to tailors and maid-servants all the day long. But go you. Take horse and cart and a load of apples with you.

That would be a poor look-out, said John; the market will be overstocked, and the apples would not pay for the wear and tear of horse and cart. But I will drive, however; my legs ache. To-morrow we cannot plough, and they can lead manure with three horses as well as with four; they cannot load heavily, the ground is too wet.

You are right to drive, and not to tire yourself needlessly, said his wife. But you must take a butter-ball with you. I will see to the churning directly. I shall be able to give the tailors a slice of bread-and-butter for lunch. It will be a treat for them, and perhaps they will eat less at dinner.

Ulric, said the master after supper, look after Blass, so that I may drive him in the morning; and clean up the spring-cart: it has not been used for a long time. I do not like to be seen on the high-roads with carts like those of the Oberaargau people and the farmers round Berne; there is the mud of years on the spokes and the hoops of the wheels, and one would think they did not know how to wash out their carts. They are as dirty and untidy as the spaces round their houses. They leave the heaps of shavings which their grandfathers swept up, so that if they were to return to life, they would feel quite at home.

The tailors laughed, for each knew enough of the farmers about Berne to justify John's sayings.

In the morning the fine white horse and the clean spring-cart stood

before the door. The farmer's wife put on her husband's neckerchief and arranged his collar for him, so that he might look his best; unfolded a pocket-handkerchief to see that there was not a hole in it, put it into his pocket, and asked him if he had everything he wanted. He gave some detailed instructions to Ulric, and got into the cart. His wife had the butter-basket ready, covered with a white, red-bordered cloth. She handed it up to him and said he might put it on the seat for the present, but if he had the chance of a prettier and more lively companion, he must not refuse it. She was not jealous, like Elizabeth Guseburi, who had paid people to watch, and to tell her who had gone driving with her husband. But don't be late home, added she, and bring back the basket and the cloth. Have you everything now?

Yes, said John; God bless you. Now I am off.

Blass stepped out bravely, and the farmer had the air of a man of importance as his wife and Ulric watched him from the terrace. He had gone a hundred paces, and Ulric was about to return to the stable, when he stopped. Run quickly, Ulric, said the wife; he has left something. I wonder sometimes he does not forget his head. He is the most forgetful man under the sun, she continued, in a low tone, while Ulric ran to the master and received directions to look for some papers which he had laid ready on the table of the little parlour. The good wife heard what he said, hastened in, and met Ulric with them; her husband again set off, and when he was out of sight, she went in, saying to herself, I am always glad when he is off at last, he keeps me going, and he generally forgets something.

John drove on, looking about him with the observant eye of an experienced farmer. He beheld on all sides the progress of autumn labour, the sowing of corn, and the digging of potatoes. He was especially interested in the fruit-trees, and on the look-out for some variety which he did not at present possess.

He saw at some distance before him a slender little woman, carrying a heavy basket, walking rather wearily, but showing a rosy face as she turned to look at him. Ho! Blass; step out a little, he said, then soon overtook Anna Mareili, who was a neighbour, pulled up, and offered her the vacant seat. She accepted it gladly, and said, I knew you at a distance, and thought to myself that I should not say no if you offered to take me up.

Then give me the basket, said John. He pushed back the leather apron, bestowed the basket underneath, offered one hand to the young woman, and restrained Blass with the other.

Thank you, said Anna Mareili. I am fortunate indeed. That basket would have been very heavy to carry all the way; but I was anxious to take something to sell, because I have so much to buy with the money which it will fetch.

You have no money at home, then? said John.

Not so, said Anna Mareili, the young, active wife of a neighbour; but it is better to sell what we can do without, than to spend our reserve of money.

For so young a woman, you do not reason amiss, said John.

Oh! said Anna Mareili, the oldest are not always the wisest. Some places would be improved if the young women could do as they would.

It is not that I wish to complain, but my husband's mother has some ways which, it seems to me, are not quite of the best. I do not say anything; you cannot change old people, and it is always a mistake when a son's wife expects to have all her own way. In youth one can put up with things better, but in age it is very trying when the new-comer thinks she must set all to rights, and upset everything which does not please her.

John, of course, answered as such a sensible man should; and with similar conversation, they proceeded on their way. They passed droves of cattle, bowed right and left to their acquaintances, and Anna Mareili felt very happy and almost proud in the fine cart beside the well-to-do farmer. When they arrived, she jumped out first, received the two baskets, and said if he would trust her, she would sell his butter with hers, it would be no trouble, and she knew men did not like having it to do. You do me a great favour, Anna Mareili, said John; but I will carry the baskets to the butter-market: I can do so more easily than you. Anna Mareili demurred politely, but consented, and John asked her when she would like to go back; she should drive home with him; he did not wish to be late. She arranged to meet him at dinner-time and give him the money for the butter; then they could see what time they had better start.

John went about his business and accomplished his various commissions. Towards midday he heard himself addressed by some one in the crowd, Cousin John, wait. Cousin John, listen to me. He stopped and looked about, but did not see where the voice came from. He was going on again, when a little infirm old man made his way to him, and said, panting for breath, I was afraid I should never be able to get to you.

Oh, you are kindly welcome, cousin, said John; but I should never have thought of meeting you here. What brings you so far to market?

I came on purpose to see *you*. I want to speak to you if you have time to listen to me.

Why not, cousin? Speak on.

Oh, not here, said the little man. I should like to find a quiet corner, out of the way of all this coming and going; but I am a stranger in this place.

Come with me, then, said John. I know where to take you. The hostess of the inn where I put up is a distant cousin of mine, and she is always ready to oblige me. She will give us a little parlour if she can manage it.

The kind hostess gave them her own little room, with many apologies. She said the house had never been so full as on that day, and there was not another corner at liberty, but they could have a quiet talk there, and she would bring them what refreshment they required. Just a bottle of wine now, said the little man, and something to eat at dinner-time. Bring good wine, and be sure that the meat is tender. I cannot chew it if it is tough. Formerly I did not mind about it, but now I feel old age everywhere, and I often wish that my time was ended.

Oh, cousin, said John, one would not think it from your appearance, and if *you* complain, what are *we* to say who have not the tenth part of your means?

Listen, cousin. Riches have nothing to do with it. I experience their worthlessness every day, and I came here on purpose to have a talk with you about all the worry which they occasion me. You know that I have a large estate, and I am obliged to employ a great number of workpeople. My wife and I are old, and we cannot see about things as we used to do. My son John has become such a fine gentleman in foreign parts, that he will not work on the land, and I must needs buy him an inn. I cannot depend upon him for anything except a visit now and then when he is in want of money. My daughter is of no use whatever. She thought she would be far behind her brother if she did not go away to learn French and fine manners; and now—God help me—she is a sickly, idle thing, and can do nothing but a bit of knitting now and then in the chimney-corner. If she is wanted to lend a hand to any useful work, she thinks it would be the death of her; and her face is the colour of new cheese. Under these circumstances, you may judge how things go with our workpeople. One slips away here, another there; they do nothing thoroughly. The land is out of heart; the farm scarcely produces enough to pay expenses. If I were entirely dependent upon it, I could not keep on such a farm. There are not a dozen such in the whole canton of Berne. I thought I had a good upper servant who managed everything. He has been with me eleven years, and I had the fullest confidence in him. Now I find that the miller paid me for fifty measures of corn when he received sixty, and the rascals made merry with the remainder. At last a day-labourer, whose godfather I am, could not bear to see me imposed upon any longer, and told me how I was constantly cheated; but he said I must on no account say that I had found it out through him. They all knew this, but there was no one to tell me, because they all enrich themselves at my expense. Now you may imagine the difficulty I am in. I will not sell the farm, though my son would like me to do so; he or his children may yet take pleasure in it. I will not let it, because, if I had a tenant, I could not direct anything, and the land would be completely ruined. I assure you I could not die in peace. My father gave up the farm to me in good condition, and how could I meet him again if I left it all in disorder? I should like an upper servant, one of the right sort, who has head and hands, and a good understanding, and who may be depended on. But he must be from another neighbourhood; all about me put their heads together and watch me, and try to make a prey of me. I thought you were the most likely man to help me, and I have come on purpose to see you. I should not hesitate about wages. I would give sixty crowns,—a hundred, if I could meet with the sort of man I want.

John had been quite silent, and when his cousin had finished speaking he did not reply. The hostess came in and laid the table. She said they must be so kind as to take things as they were, it was such a busy market-day she could not serve them quite as she would like. She did not know if the dishes would be to their taste; she had brought the best she could. The cousin kept up a conversation with her, but John did not say much. Then a maid-servant came and said a woman was asking for Farmer Boden. The hostess joked and said he must have made an appointment. The maid said, She is a pretty one, too. As soon as John

was out of the room, the cousin said, Is he that sort of man? I could not have believed it of him.

Take care what you say, said the hostess. There is no harm in this. He is one of the best of men. This is very likely to be a farmer's wife, who would like to drive home with him.

John returned, bringing a basket with him, and remarked that a neighbour had sold his butter for him; she did not want to wait, but would drive home with some one else if he pleased.

The little man said that would be a pity, as he was going her way; he had seemed unsettled for a long time, expecting somebody. He had only half listened to him, and given him no answer.

You are quite wrong, cousin, said John. I have been thinking, and I have not been able to answer because a struggle has been going on in my mind. I could not decide to tell you that I have just such a servant as you want. I acknowledge that I should be grieved to lose him. I could not easily meet with such another. But I ought not to stand in his way.

Just so, said the cousin; but why will you part with him? What don't you like about him?

Nothing, said John. He is just right for me; but he looks for higher wages, and he deserves them. He can manage land and labour and stock with the best of farmers, and he is so honest that you might leave him in a king's treasure-chamber, and he would not touch a kreutzer; all is safe with him.

He would do for me, said the cousin; he is exactly the man I want. And what do you think? Would he come to me for forty crowns? That is a fine sum.*

Just what I give him myself, said John. If you want him, you must give him sixty at least.

Is he related to you? asked the cousin.

No, said John; he was a poor lad when he came to me.

After a series of inquiries, the suspicious cousin at last decided to drive back with John and see the servant for himself, while John began to be sorry that he had ever mentioned him. The cousin paid the whole reckoning, though John protested.

When they went out Anna Mareili came forward and said she had made a fine miss of it. Ulric Burris had promised to drive her home; he would not take a refusal; she must wait there. She had waited and looked for him in vain. She was ashamed of being so long at the fair, and if she were to run all the way back, she could not now be home until ever so late. John said the old place was ready for her; and so they drove away, John in front, and the cousin in his handsome spring-cart behind. Joggeli, after much reflection during his solitary drive, called to John, when they were about an hour from their destination, to know if there was a smith in the next village; his horse would cast a shoe if he did not get it fastened on. John said there was, and he would wait for him; there was an inn close by. But Joggeli reminded him that the

* The reader will please note the working out of the character of Joggeli; it is one of Gotthelf's subtlest studies. The sixty or a hundred crowns gone to forty, and the question in next sentence, "Is he related to you?"

woman was in a hurry, said it was not worth while for him to put up, and he should soon follow. So John drove on.

Joggeli went slowly to the inn, had his horse taken out, and, for appearance' sake, had a nail put in one of his shoes. Meantime he asked the ostler what sort of a farmer that was who had driven by, and if that was his wife?

No, said the man.

Then they are very fond of each other?

I have heard nothing of the kind, said the ostler.

He had a fine horse in his cart, said Joggeli. I want just such a one, and have not got suited at the fair. Has he many horses?

He has a whole stableful, said the ostler.

You seldom meet with a good horse where there are so many; they are badly fed, and they look like it, suggested Joggeli.

That is not the case at Farmer Boden's. Everything belonging to him is well cared for, and he has a first-rate servant; there is not such another for miles round.

Then Joggeli went into the inn parlour, and began much the same kind of conversation with the hostess over a bottle of wine. With various turnings, he came at last to the same point—John was a fine man, his wife an irreproachable woman, and his servant so valuable that many had tried to get him; but the master and man were attached to each other, and would not part. *Have they not had some little difference lately?* * asked Joggeli. Not that they knew of; they had had wine with each other there on the preceding Sunday, and seemed on excellent terms.

In the meantime John had driven home, and taken Anna Mareili with him. When his wife came out and took the whip, John said, Now, wife, you must be very agreeable, or Anna Mareili will stop with me.

Then I must take pains to please you, said Eisi, pleasantly. She lifted out the baskets, and said Anna Mareili must come in and have a cup of coffee. Anna Mareili made many objections, said she should have some at home, and remarked that she ought to have got out of the conveyance before—she would not like to meet some wives when she had been driving with their husbands, and she would not venture it for any money. Did you think I was jealous? said the wife, laughing. No; I am too old for that. There was a time when I thought John ought to look displeased with all other women. But that passes away gradually, when one sees that there is no reason to be jealous. That gave rise to various histories of jealous wives as they sat drinking coffee, when the wife jumped up and said, Who is this driving towards the house?

Oh, I forgot; it is cousin Joggeli, of the Steinbrucke; he will stay the night with us.

Well, I declare! and you never to mention it! What a man you are! And what does the cousin want? He has been years and years without coming to see us.

You will see soon enough, said John.

Anna Mareili took leave, and met the cousin driving in. The master

* Italics mine; the whole dialogue is quite wonderful.

and mistress stood at the house-door to receive him, and Ulric sprang forward to take his horse. Joggeli stepped down slowly and with difficulty, but did not fail to give his directions. Rub him down a little, and don't give him anything to drink immediately; he is warm. He asked John if he was still foddering with old hay, and took care to satisfy himself by various inquiries before he proceeded, with tottering steps, to the house.

He was scarcely seated, when he asked, Was that Ulric?

Yes, said John.

He seems to me rather young and lithe.

He is nearly thirty, said John, and active on his legs. I do not like men who move as if they had heavy weights fastened to their heels.

Then he went to the cellar and fetched wine and cheese. As he passed the kitchen his wife asked him, Why does he inquire about Ulric? What has he to do with him?

I have not time to tell you now, answered John. Come in, and you will hear all about it.

What is the matter with John? thought his wife; I have not seen him look so strange for a long time. She found Joggeli complaining of his sufferings and disappointments; but as soon as John had gone to look after the work of the day, he said to her, What is amiss with your servant Ulric? John has recommended him to me.

There cannot possibly be anything, replied the wife; he is the best servant far and wide; we have never had his equal.

Just so, said Joggeli; but how does he go on with the girls? He looks to me as if he would be one of the worst.

It would be well, said the wife, if there were none worse than he.

Oh, indeed! said Joggeli. John drove a pretty little woman home with him to-day, and brought her to the house, as I saw. Who is she?

That is our neighbour, an excellent woman, who is very dear to me, and her house is the only one to which I often go.

Then, returning to the former subject, Joggeli said, So you really can't do with Ulric?

Who could say such a thing? she replied, hastily. Surely John will not be such a fool as to part with his right hand, and I also shall have something to say on the subject.

Then John came back, and they talked on indifferent matters; but when Eisi had gone, Joggeli returned to the charge, and remarked, I see, John, that your wife has a great liking for Ulric, and thinks a great deal of him.

Yes, said John; no one has ever pleased her so well; she had something to complain of in the rest, but he has given her satisfaction for years.

It would, perhaps, be no pity if they were parted, said Joggeli. I do not wish to say any harm of your wife, but it is not always best when wives and servants agree so very well.

Oh, in a case like ours, there is no objection to it. My wife and I are so entirely at one, that neither of us desires to make a party against the other. And for a long time there has been a pleasant feeling with the servants also; they have been at peace with each other, and they

have made no league against us. This state of things is good and happy for all concerned.

I do not know that, said Joggeli. If you had my experience, you would understand that when the servants are all of one mind, the master is sure to be the sufferer.

The wife could not make out what all the talk was tending to, until at table Ulric was again the subject of the conversation, and she became convinced that he was really proposed as head-servant to Joggeli. Then she said to her husband, Do think, I beg you, John, what you are doing.

I should not like to stand in the way of Ulric's good fortune.

All is not good fortune which seems so, said she, in a low tone, and went out of the room.

CHAPTER XII

HOW ULRIC LEFT HIS OLD PLACE

"The universal law of the matter is that, assuming any given quantity of energy and sense in master and servant, the greatest material result obtainable by them will be, not through antagonism to each other, but through affection for each other."—*Unto this Last*, § 9.

Then Joggeli urged an immediate interview with Ulric. John thought there was no hurry; he had better look about him first, judge for himself how the work was done, and speak to Ulric to-morrow. But this was not what he wanted. He said he must be off betimes in the morning; he would settle the matter to-day, and then, perhaps, he might get a good night's rest. He had had scarcely any sleep lately, because his mind had been troubled and disturbed.

So Ulric was called into the little parlour; and he presented himself at the door, full of curiosity. Joggeli filled his glass, brought it to Ulric, and said, Pledge me, and come and sit down; I have something to say to you. Then he proceeded to tell him that he wanted a head-servant, that Farmer Boden had recommended him, that he gave good wages, and would not object to raising them if he was well suited, adding, If you would like to come, name the wages, and we will settle the matter at once.

Ulric was quite stunned. At last he said he was well off where he was, and he had no wish to leave; but if the master thought it best, he would accept this place, though with regret. You had better try it, said John, and if you do not suit each other, I will take you back any hour.

And now what wages do you ask? said Joggeli.

The master must name them for me, said Ulric.

Well, said John, what would you both think of sixty crowns, two pairs of shoes, and four shirts, besides drink-money?

Ulric said that would be right for him, and Joggeli replied that it was a good deal, and they might have named something less to begin with, but he would not chaffer, and he would engage him on those terms, only he could not promise much drink-money—the stableman got it for the horses, and the milker for the cows. Very well, said John; you can make him a handsome present at the new year if he suits you. Joggeli said he would gladly do that, and, to begin with, he would give him twenty batzen of earnest-money, and he would expect him when the right time came. So he put the money into his hand; and the thing was done before John and Ulric had time to look at each other, and before the farmer's wife could press her objections. Joggeli said he thought it best to settle it at once, for there was no telling what might happen. One never knows, he remarked, what changes one night may bring.

And the old fox was certainly right. Eisi was silent; there was no use in protesting now. But as soon as she was alone with John, she compensated herself for the self-restraint she had exercised. Tell me now what you are thinking of. I would not have believed that you could be so foolish. Never since we have been married have you given me so much vexation. You are often out, and how can things go on without Ulric? All the old anxiety will come back again. You go and offer the best of servants to an old fool who trusts no one, and is never satisfied. Some one should manage for you, my dear. I do not think you could have been in your right sober senses when you did it. Only tell me what you were thinking about?

John's reasons did not now appear so conclusive even to himself. He did not feel satisfied, and he scarcely knew what to say; but he replied, I thought to make Ulric's fortune. He cannot always remain a servant, and if he is to set up for himself, he must have money, and I am not able to give him higher wages. But his wife would hear nothing of the fortune for Ulric, nor allow that they could not afford him better wages. In fact, she had no lack of words; and she did not let John sleep much that night. Ulric did not sleep either; he was half sorry for having consented to leave Farmer Boden's family. But Joggeli slept so soundly that his snoring was heard all over the house.

The next morning all felt disturbed, but Joggeli was not concerned by their long faces. He made haste to be off, gave Ulric another red batz, and drove away quite satisfied.

When he was gone, Ulric felt that he would like to give up the bargain, and the mistress was of the same mind. Why need they put themselves out for Joggeli? He had never done anything for them, and never would do. He lived seven hours' journey away from them, and perhaps they might never see him again. Ulric, on his part, said he should not mind it so much if he were going to be alone in his new place; but he could not bear the thought of having to direct three or four farm-men and a number of young women and day-labourers. He knew well how it would be. If he gave in to them, they would all trample upon him and despise him, and he would not have that; or if he wished to govern them, they would rebel, and perhaps the master would not support him. It would be best to return the earnest-money at once.

But John was not of this opinion, he said. It would be bad behaviour to a stranger, still more to a relation. Nothing happens by chance, and we do not know what good may come out of this. Things that are unpromising at first sometimes turn out most favourably. We must abide by the agreement, and it may be best for both sides. If you begin gently, Ulric, you may make way and manage well. And as regards ourselves, we shall not be badly off with Hans: he has been well trained, and he has much goodwill. At all events, the thing is done, and cannot be altered, so now we had better reconcile ourselves to it, and say as little about it as possible.

The time passed quickly, and Christmas-tide approached. Tailors, sempstresses, and shoemakers took their turn in the house. It was not said that they were working chiefly for Ulric, but so it was. Either the mistress had a remnant of linen, not required for anything, which would make one

or two shirts for him, or the master had a coat which was too small, or a vest which did not quite please him. Things were altered and made, and his outfit was prepared, like that of a son who is leaving his father's house.

One evening the master said he had better go the next day to fetch his certificate from the parson. Master, said Ulric, I do not like the thoughts of going. It is true that I regard and respect the parson; his preaching has done me good, and he has taught me that one cannot deserve the name of a man without loving the Saviour and keeping His commandments. But I was a wild and tiresome lad at the time of the Instruction, he must have had great trouble with me, and I have avoided him ever since. I should not like to see him now; he would not know that I am sorry for the past, and that I am changed since those days. He might lecture me sharply. You could easily get the certificate for me.

No, said the farmer; it is right and proper for you to go yourself, and if you get a word of advice, it will not hurt you.

So there was no help for it, and Ulric had to go. He went with a heavy heart to the Parsonage, and he felt full of trepidation when he was invited in. When the parson said, What do you want? what can I do for you? he could scarcely bring out his request for a certificate. The parson opened great books, and said, Your name is Ulric Merk; your father was called Christian, your mother Mädlle Smock; Gaspard Menech was your godfather. Then Ulric was much surprised; he had grown a foot taller since the Instruction, and he did not expect to be recognised at first. The pastor resumed, So you are going to Steinbrucke, in the parish of Ueflige? I shall rejoice if it is for your advantage. I have already had much pleasure in your good conduct, for nothing gives me more satisfaction than to see any one turning to a better way. I did not expect it of you during your time of Instruction, but the good God often does more than we look for. Do not forget at Steinbrucke that the same Lord is with you there, and that secret things are open to His all-seeing eyes. As you will be entrusted with much, much will be required of you, and you will have still greater need of God's help to preserve your integrity. Try to realise what you say when you pray, "Lead us not into temptation," and remember the Saviour's words, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." I shall always be glad to hear of you, and when you come to visit your old employers, I shall be heartily glad to see you, if you will come and let me know how you are going on.

Ulric went away quite touched and astonished, and hastened to tell his master of the reception he had met with. Only think! said he; the minister knew me, and knew all about me: knew that I had reformed myself, and that I was going to the Steinbrucke; and I fancy he has even some idea of the state of things there. How is it possible? he has never spoken to me since the Instruction, and he has not been to see you for a long time. The master replied, This is the effect of *character;* you remember I have talked to you about it; a good name spreads far, and a bad one yet farther, and no one is too insignificant to be spoken of. A minister pays attention to this character, so that he may know how to speak to people when occasion serves. A word spoken in season has often a good effect, and it hurts no one to know that he is observed.

I confess, said Ulric, that the encouragement has made me glad, and I no longer regret having had to go myself. The minister said one or two things to me that I shall never forget.

The master resolved to take Ulric to the Steinbrucke; thus he would spare him expense by the way, and have the opportunity of advising him better when he saw things with his own eyes. Ulric left nearly all his wages behind, and he had now considerably more than a hundred and fifty crowns in the savings bank. He had a strong box, with a good lock, to take with him, and all his preparations were completed.

The new year came, and with it the plentiful table and the usual outward signs of festivity. Formerly they had had merry times, but now no one could resist the sadness which all had tried to overcome. Ulric said, Do I sit here for the last time? and the tears poured down his cheeks. He stood up, and went away. They were all in tears, and could not eat, till at last Eisi said, John, do find Ulric, and fetch him in. He is going, and it has not been *my* doing, but let us spend the last hours together!

CHAPTER XIII

THE NUT-BROWN EYES

"Bright maiden's grace."—*St. Mark's Rest,* § 205.

On the following morning the sledge was prepared, Ulric's box was fastened on, and he had breakfast in the little parlour with his master and mistress, on coffee, cheese, and an omelette. He lingered when all was ready, and when there was no excuse for further delay, he took the mistress's hand, and said, Good-bye, mother, and don't be vexed. He could not restrain his tears, and Eisi had to put her apron to her eyes. She said, I do not know why I should be vexed if all goes well with you; and if not, come back to us, the sooner the better. The children would scarcely let him go, and Ulric felt as if his heart would break. Then the master said they must be off if they meant to arrive that day, and it was not the last time they would see each other. When the sledge was out of sight, Eisi slowly dried her eyes, and tried to comfort the weeping children.

The two travellers drove on in silence through the glistening snow. No, no! said the master, from time to time, when the lively Blass broke into a gallop, drew the sledge as fast as an arrow, and sent the snow flying with his rapid movements.

I am very much troubled, said Ulric at last; every step that brings me nearer seems to add to my burden. I see plainly that I am going into misfortune.

No, said the master; do not take this for a presentiment of evil. Remember how you felt ten years ago, when I urged you to amendment. How hard it seemed to you, and how little faith you had in your own future. Yet, by degrees, the improvement came, your confidence grew, and now you are a man of whom it may be said, that you have won your way. So do not be troubled; what you have before you is much easier; and, at the worst, you will return to me in a year. Act with circumspection, and be firm; my cousin is dreadfully mistrustful, but when he once knows you, he will value you. The servants will be the most difficult to deal with; do things quietly, by degrees; try kindness first; and, if that will not do, assert your authority, and show them that you will not put up with what is wrong.

It was a clear bright January day when Ulric and Farmer Boden arrived at the Steinbrucke through tracts of open fields, between white hedges and glistening trees. The estate lay about a quarter of a league from Ueflige, and consisted of more than a hundred acres of fertile land,

not all in one enclosure, but some of it detached, at a little distance. In some places the land might suffer in wet years, but this might be mended.

When they drove up, Joggeli was tottering with his stick about the house, which lay rather low; he said, I have been looking out for you a long time; I thought you were not coming. Here, one of you, take the horse! He called towards the stables adjoining the house; but no one came, and Ulric had to loose Blass himself. He asked where he must put him. Come here, one of you, will you? shouted Joggeli again; and on receiving no answer, he went angrily to the stable, knocked the door open, and saw the groom rubbing down a horse with the greatest composure. Don't you hear when you are called? said Joggeli.

I heard nothing.

Then listen better next time, and take this horse now.

The groom muttered that he must make room for him first, and made as much commotion amongst the horses as a hawk in a dove-cot. They rushed against the mangers, and kicked so that Ulric was in danger of his life as he made way with his white horse to the hindmost part of the stable. Then he could find no halter, and the groom said he ought to have brought one with him. This was the first answer he received in his new place! When he returned to the sledge and unfastened his box, Joggeli said the woodcutters were to carry it; but no one moved. At last they sent the boy, who let go his hold on the stairs, so that Ulric was almost thrown backwards, and it was owing to his own strength that he escaped a dangerous fall.

The room into which he was shown was dark; it could not be heated, and there were two beds in it. He was standing full of dismay, when some one called to him to go down and have some warm food. He opened the door, and was received by a beautiful young girl, with nut-brown hair and eyes, red and white complexion, rosy lips, and dazzlingly white teeth. She was tall and strong, and brilliantly healthy, though her figure was slender and graceful. She had a serious manner, with reserved possibilities of jest and playfulness, combined with unmistakable goodness and dignity of nature. All about her there was that well-known but indescribable something which, where it éxists, testifies to inward and outward purity—to a soul that shrinks from all that is base, and to a person which is always neat and clean, even in the midst of the roughest and dirtiest work. Freneli was a poor relation of the family; in her infancy no one wished to have her, and as she grew older, she was looked upon as a Cinderella; but she always shook off the ashes, and was never troubled by them. She met God and man with a smiling face each new day, and in the brightness of her blooming youth, made a place for herself in people's hearts which they could not deny to her. For a long time she had been loved by her relations, while they thought they disliked her as the illegitimate child of a day-labourer and a young woman belonging to their own family.

Freneli had not opened the door; the brown eyes looked questioningly at Ulric as he stepped out of the room. She invited him downstairs, and preceded him into the living-room, where Joggeli and John were seated at an abundantly spread table. There were hot, smoking dishes of fresh and salt meat, also sauerkraut and sliced pears. A stout, pleasant-looking

old woman came forward to meet him, brought out her hand from under her apron, and said, as she offered it to him, Are you the new head-servant? Well, if you are as honest as you are handsome, you will do well, I am sure. Sit down and begin. The food stands there to be eaten.

There was also, near the stove, another person, a woman with a thin figure, white face, and pale dull eyes; she had an elegant workbox before her, and wound blue silk from one ball to another, without taking any notice of what was going on about her.

Joggeli related at some length the further discoveries he had made of the dishonesty of his late head-servant, and regretted that severe penalties were not now enforced. Formerly, he said, a man would have been hanged for stealing a rope, and now even women who poison their husbands get off. I wonder which is the worst, a man who is killed contrary to the law or left living contrary to the law? One seems to me as bad as the other. So I think, when those who ought to maintain the laws relax them, they are unpardonable before God and man.

During Joggeli's long speech his wife continually urged John, and specially Ulric, to eat. Take something now; take it; it is there to be eaten! or, Is it not to your taste? We give it as we have it. Joggeli! pour out. See! they have empty glasses. Drink. There is more where that came from: our son gave it to us; it must be good; he bought it himself in foreign parts. It cost actually five and a half batzen, short measure.

When Ulric would not take any more, she took up some of the largest pieces with the fork and pushed them on his plate, saying, I shall be astonished if you cannot manage that. A young fellow like you must eat to keep up his strength. We like people who work for us to have plenty of good food. However, the time came at last when Ulric, more than satisfied, took his hat, said grace, and stood up to go out. Stay, said Joggeli; where are you going? They will have seen to your horse. I gave strict orders about him. Ulric said he would like to look round a little, and the mistress replied, Go, then, but come in again if you are cold; you must not work to-day; do you understand?

He will have something to bear, said Joggeli when he was gone. They look upon his coming with great ill-will. I believe the groom would have liked the place for himself. But it is right for me if they are all at variance. When they agree too well, the master always pays for it.

Oh, said John, that depends upon how you look at it. It is true that when servants are all on one side, and the master on the other, he must be the loser. But if all are at strife, and will rather hinder than give each other a helping hand, then also he and his property must suffer. I think it is always true that "peace is productive, and discord destroys." I am not well pleased with what I see here. No one came to take my horse; no one would help Ulric to carry his box. Each does as he likes, and fears no one. Ulric will not be able to put up with this state of things. If he has responsibility as head-servant, he must also have authority, and not allow all to please themselves. Then they will rebel, and if you wish to keep him, you must support him. I tell you frankly that he will return to me if he cannot get on here. We shall always have room for him. We are grieved enough to part with him, and my wife cried as if he had been one of our own children. The old mother wiped her eyes

at these words, and said, He shall not be badly off with us, Cousin John. It seems to me that we should not mind any wages to a man we can trust.

It is not a matter of wages, said John. His authority must be supported, and his word must be believed. He has been like a son in our house, and it would be something quite strange to him to be treated as a servant.

Oh, said the mother, do not be uneasy; we will do our utmost. He shall have a cup of coffee whenever we make for ourselves between times. We have our piece of meat every day, and the servants only on Sunday. Where should we be if we gave it to them every day? But if you think Ulric would like it, he shall have it sometimes.

That is not the thing, either, said John. Ulric would not desire it, and it would make others jealous. If you have confidence in him, and give him help when he needs it, all will go well.

This conversation was not to Joggeli's taste; he proposed an inspection of the stables and barns, where he kept the farmer the remainder of the day, asking his advice and receiving some. But John could not praise anything. The calves were badly kept; the sheep were two crowded, and stifled one another. There was need of improvement everywhere. They met Ulric as they re-entered, and invited him in. He was silent and sorrowful all the evening.

The following morning John prepared for departure, after great urging from his host and hostess to make a good breakfast, and also to have a dram to keep out the cold, but he said he never took such a thing in the morning. Ulric kept close to him, like a child who fears that his father will escape him, and when the moment of separation came, he proposed driving part of the way with him, as it would be a long time before he should see him again.

Well, said John, when they were fairly off, how do you like your new home?

Oh, master, said Ulric, I cannot express what I feel. I have seen many places, but never one like that. There is no order anywhere. The manure-heap is never rightly cleared away: the water from it runs all about the stables; the horses stand higher behind than before; the corn is only half threshed out of the straw. There is piggish disorder everywhere. You can scarcely find the tools! The servants all look at me as if they would eat me; either they give no answer, or reply so impudently that I can hardly keep my hands off them.

Be patient and composed, said John; begin gently, take the reins imperceptibly, do as much as you can yourself, say everything civilly, and try if you can gradually enlist at least some of them on your side. Thus gain time for observation, and acquaint yourself with your surroundings, so that you may know how to act for the best. There is no use in trying to correct everything at once, before you quite understand the state of affairs. When gentleness will not answer, then speak decidedly and show that you will be master; if the worst of the servants have to leave, so much the better. But do not lose heart; you are not a slave; you can go when you please. It is an experience which may do you great good.

It is well for you to see things from another point of view, and to learn the difficult art of commanding. This change may be the making of you. Be on good terms with the women; if you have them on your side, you have already won much. But if the old mistress makes too much of you, and invites you to coffee, do not go. Share with the rest, and be always foremost with the work. In this way, you must succeed in the end.

Ulric felt greatly encouraged, but he could scarcely bring himself to part from John. He had so many things to consult him about: the seed-sowing, the culture suitable for that kind of land, and numerous points which crowded into his mind. John stopped at an inn, had a bottle of wine with him, and then sent him away, almost by force.

When Ulric was alone, he felt for the first time his own importance. He was well pleased to walk through the estate which was entrusted to his care, and he went towards the house with the firm step and self-reliant air of a colonel who is expected by a regiment in revolt.

CHAPTER XIV

HOW ULRIC CONDUCTED HIMSELF AS HEAD-SERVANT

"To the compelling of sloth and the scourging of sin, the strong hand will have to address itself as long as this wretched little dusty and volcanic world breeds nettles and spits fire."—*Time and Tide*, § 160.

Ulric went composedly to the workpeople. Six were threshing, and he proceeded to the cowherd and the groom, who were preparing the fodder. They said they could do it alone, but he replied that he could not assist in the barn to-day, so he would help them, and when they had done the fodder they would remove the manure. They grumbled, but he set to work and shook the dust out of the hay with his accustomed skill, thus silently constraining the others to do better than before. He arranged the hay in little heaps of equal height, and then took a besom and swept the passage which separated the horse from the cow provender. The cowherd said if it had to be done like that always they could not prepare in two days as much as the beasts would eat in one. Ulric said that depended on how you were accustomed to do it. He had great difficulty with the cowherd, who would only take up the top layer of manure from the stable, so he remarked that it was very warm outside, the cows would not take cold, and they would give the stable a thorough turn-out. Certainly it was needful—they almost required a pick-axe to get to the stone pavement, and the forking out of the manure between the stones was a refinement of cleanliness, which was left for a future occasion. The receptacle for liquid manure had to be scooped out, as it overflowed about the stable, and Ulric had difficulty in having it carried to the land and utilised. Neither would any one spread the other manure properly with the fork; they would let it lie in heaps as it was emptied out of the stables, and he was told that it would be foddering time, so it must be left until the next day. Ulric said, It can easily be done now; manure must be spread while it is warm, especially in winter, otherwise it freezes and cannot be done at all. He set to work himself, and the two servants let him do it, and went to mock at him behind the stable door and in the barn.

Indoors, they were wondering that the new head-servant did not return, and beginning to fear that he had driven off with John, and would not come back any more. Joggeli kept watch at a window which commanded the road; he was tired and cross and very suspicious, he had never believed that John could be so false with any one, still less with a relation. But no one was to be trusted in these days! In the midst of his lamentations, Freneli came in and said, You might look out here for long enough; the new servant is outside working in the manure; he

has had the stable cleaned out, he thought it should be done thoroughly, and he is now finishing what the others would not do. Why did he not tell me when he returned? said Joggeli; and the old mother exclaimed, Why did he not come in for something to eat? Go and tell him there is some food kept warm for him, and he must come directly. Wait, said Joggeli, I will go myself and see what has been done. But tell him to come, said she, I think he must have a good appetite by this time!

Joggeli went out, and was well pleased to see what Ulric had done; on his way to seek the cowherd and groom, to show them how a manure-heap ought to be kept, he looked into the barn and saw the provender prepared with care and cleanliness. Then he inspected the stable, and could not believe his eyes when he saw the cows standing comfortably in clean straw. He went to Ulric and said he had not expected him to do the dirtiest and roughest work himself; *that* properly belonged to others. Ulric said there were already too many at the threshing, and he had done it this time to show them how he would have it in future. Joggeli invited him in, but Ulric said he would like to see how the corn had been threshed.

He found all cleared away, and the day's work ended early. The corn was badly threshed, a number of half ears were left, and it was still worse sieved and winnowed. The corn in the bin was dirty, and he would have liked to empty it all out, and have it done over again, but he put a constraint upon himself, and thought he would make the men do it differently in the morning.

When Joggeli went in, he said that the new servant pleased him, it was evident he knew what he was about, if only he would not go his own way so much. One place was not like another, and at this rate, there would be no orders left for him to give in his own house.

After supper, Ulric asked his master what work he had in view for the remainder of the winter; he thought it should be arranged in due succession, so as to be out of the way before the new demands of the spring season.

Yes, said Joggeli, all in good time, but we cannot do everything at once. The threshing will take three weeks longer, afterwards there will be the wood-cutting, and then it will be spring.

If I may say so, said Ulric, I think we should begin the wood-cutting now—the ground is hard and dry, and the weather is splendid. In February it is generally wet, the ground is soft, and the roads are heavy.

Joggeli said this could not be done, they had never been in the habit of leaving the threshing until February.

That was not what I proposed, said Ulric; they might go on with the corn, while I and another man make ready as much wood as the waggoner could drive home, and he also could cut in the meantime.

That would leave a man short in the barn, and delay the corn, said Joggeli; they will soon make an end of the wood-cutting, when they all set to work together.

As you please, said Ulric; but I thought the cowherd might very well thresh, if he had help in the middle of the day with the fodder and the manure. And two good workers often get through more work in a wood, than a crowd of careless men.

Yes, said Joggeli, it is often so; but we will let the wood-cutting stand over, threshing is now the first thing to be considered.

Ulric, after this interview, went to bed much discouraged.

You are a strange man, said the old woman to her husband. All that Ulric said was very sensible, and quite for our advantage. It would be a good thing if those lazy loons, the cowherd and the groom, had something else to do besides lounging about in the sunshine! In this way Ulric will be of no use to you.

I will not be dictated to by a servant; I will show him and every one else that I am master, said Joggeli, hastily.

Yes, you will do that, rejoined his wife. You are so much afraid of the bad that you let them go their own evil way, and you defeat the efforts of the good; that is your way of being master! It has always been so with us, and now it is the same thing over again!

The next morning Ulric told the mistress that one of the maids was not required in the barn, she could be employed at anything that was needed in the house; then he set himself actively to work, and hit with his flail so that the whole length of the corn, from the tip to the root of the ear, must be threshed; and when one floorful was finished, he had it cleared away, and another spread, without loss of time. Ulric urged, not by words, but by the constraint of his own labour.

In the house, they thought they must be using a different kind of flail, the sound was so different. The maid, who was allowed to stay in the house, told Freneli how they abused Ulric, and boasted that they were not going to put up with new regulations. She remarked that it was a pity, for he was a well-mannered fellow, and every one must acknowledge that he knew how to work.

While the business of threshing proceeded in the barn, the groom went out on horseback, with the pretext of going to the blacksmith, the cowherd took out a cow, without saying where he was going, and it was noon before either of them returned.

After dinner, Ulric helped to peel the potatoes that were left: this is usual in farm-houses when time permits, but the others hurried out to amuse themselves, scarcely taking time to say grace. When Ulric went out, great scuffling and wrestling were going on in the barn; he called the cowherd to take out the calves, that he might examine them. The cowherd answered that no one should meddle with his calves, and the groom stepped up to Ulric, and asked him if he would venture to wrestle with him. Ulric's blood boiled, as he saw that it was a planned game, but he felt he must not draw back, nor lose presence of mind. Sooner or later, he well knew that he must have a stand-up fight with them and be put to the test. It was as well that they should find out now what sort of man they had to deal with. So he said, carelessly, Oh! if you will have a try, it is all the same to me; and twice over, he sent the groom on his back with a crash. Then the cowherd said he would have a turn, though it was hardly worth his while to contend with such a walking-stick. He put his brown hairy arms round Ulric, as if he would crush him into dust, but Ulric held his ground and did not swerve. The cowherd worked his arms and legs freely, and butted with his head, until Ulric, weary of the struggle, gathered up all his strength, gave him a

blow, and flung him to the far end of the barn, where he lay for some time without knowing where he was. Freneli happened to pass with the food for the pigs; she saw Ulric's victory, and told her godmother how he had been insulted and made to fight. Ulric said he would put off the inspection of the calves to the next day, and took up the flail as if nothing had happened.

The cleaning of the corn took longer this time, and yet they had finished sooner than usual, because they worked with zeal and activity. When Ulric told the master how much corn was done, he said they had not had so much any day that year.

In the evening, when they were all at table, Joggeli came and said he thought it would be well to begin the wood-cutting; the weather was fine, and the horses were doing nothing; the wood-cutting and threshing might proceed together if properly arranged. The groom said the roads were icy, and the horses were not sharpened; another declared that the corn would never get finished if there were fewer than six for the threshing.

Ulric said nothing.

At last, when Joggeli did not know what more to say, he appealed to Ulric for his opinion, and he replied:

The master's orders must be obeyed; Hans, the carter, and I can cut wood; if the cowherd helps to thresh, and the others help *him* with the fodder and the manure, the wood-cutting will not hinder the threshing.

Well then, be it so, said Joggeli, and went away immediately.

Then a violent storm broke over Ulric's head; the carter swore that he would not set foot in the wood, the cowherd that he would not touch the flail, and the others, not to be behindhand, swore that they would not thresh with only four. They would not let themselves be put upon; they were not beasts of burden! They knew what was their due! They were quite aware where such ideas came from, but Ulric had better mind what he was about, if he wished to see a summer at the Steinbrucke; he would not be the first who had come in like a magistrate and been obliged to slink away like a dog! He must be an ill-natured churl to molest his fellow-servants just to curry favour with the master, but they would soon finish him off!

Ulric did not say much, but told them the master's orders must be carried out, and that they might be thankful if they had never any one worse to deal with than himself. He did not wish to put upon any one, and he would not let any one put upon him, he had no reason to fear one of them. He asked the mistress to be good enough to prepare some food for them to take out the next day, as they could not return from the wood-cutting in time for dinner.

In the morning they proceeded to the forest; however the carter grumbled and swore, he had to go. The cowherd was still determined not to thresh, and the master did not appear.

Then the mistress gathered herself up, and went out and told him she thought he need not be above taking a flail, many people superior to him had handled one to good purpose. They could not keep a cowherd who did nothing but gape about him all the morning.

So the wood-cutting was done in no time, and in February the weather

and the roads were so bad, that there would have been little pleasure or profit in doing it then.

Though Ulric worked hard out of doors, and exercised his mastership by being foremost in labour, as well as by directing others, he was always ready to help with whatever the mistress gave out in the evenings; he said, the more they all helped each other, the sooner they should have done, and that it was reasonable and customary for all to assist in preparing the food.

If he saw a maid-servant carrying a heavy basket of potatoes to the fountain, he would help her with it, or send the boy, who at first had not thought it necessary to go when he was called, but whom Ulric accustomed to obedience.

All is difficult, he said, in a household, when servants do not give mutual help, and nothing is to be done when they annoy and vex each other, making the simplest duties burdensome by ill-will and ill-temper.

It was some time before they could perceive the truth of this saying.

One special characteristic of the men at the Steinbrucke was their rudeness to the women; if a man was asked to help one of the maids, he mocked and swore, and would not move a finger; even the mistress had to put up with this, and when she appealed to Joggeli he said she was always complaining, and he did not keep men-servants to wait on the women; they might do nothing else if they were to follow all their fancies.

The very different behaviour of Ulric, who was not accustomed to such discord in a house, offended the men, and drew upon him their angry scorn and mockery, which, provoked also by other causes, became almost insupportable.

On the first Saturday, the cowherd, out of sheer ill-will, refused to clear away the manure from the stable, and said he should do it the next morning. Ulric said there was no reason whatever to put it off, and if they did not take it away, they could not clean up about the house, as was usual on Saturday evenings.

Besides, he said, we are commanded not to work on the Sunday, so certainly it is not right to leave the dirtiest work for that day.

The cowherd said, Sunday this, Sunday the other! What is Sunday to me! I shall not do the manure to-day.

Ulric's blood boiled, but he restrained himself and only said, Well, I will do it.

The master, who heard the contention, prudently withdrew, and grumbled to himself, If only Ulric would not order every one about, and introduce new ways! They have cleared away the manure for long enough on the Sunday morning, and it has done very well! It might have been right enough for *him!*

CHAPTER XV

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN A NEW PLACE

"St. George and the Dragon—combatant both, to the best of their powers."—*St. Mark's Rest,* § 168.

On the Saturday night there was great coming and going, but on the Sunday morning, when Ulric went down at the usual hour, no human being was astir. The horses scraped impatiently, and the cows lowed, but neither groom nor cowherd was to be seen.

Ulric gave the fodder once, then twice, and finally began to milk, for there is nothing worse for animals than not to be attended to at the set time. He saw with alarm, on a nearer inspection, how much the cows were injured by neglect and carelessness. He had nearly finished, when the cowherd arrived, swearing that the milking might wait, and if he found him sitting there again, he would knock him under the cow, and make him remember it all his life.

Ulric said perhaps the cowherd might be the one who would have reason to remember it. The milking must be done at the right time, and well done, or he should do it himself.

In the house they were much astonished to receive the milk so early. Freneli said it would be well if there were a new order of things; it had long been needed.

When they were called to breakfast, Ulric was first in his place, the two maids next made their appearance, looking blowsy and sleepy,—the men-servants seemed not to be coming at all.

Freneli complained sharply. She said, This waiting is most tiresome; one can never get done in time to go to church; of course these sluggards do not think of going themselves, but they also prevent others, who wish to attend to their religious duties.

Ulric asked how far it was to the church, what time he ought to start, and where he should sit?

They will open their eyes, said Freneli, if any one from the Steinbrucke goes to church; it is many years since any of the servants attended public worship. My cousin goes when he has to be godfather, and his wife twice in the year, at Christmas and at the yearly fast day. Lizabethli (or Elisi, as she likes to be called,) whenever she has gay new clothes; I, when I have spoken sharply enough to get them down to breakfast in good time! As for the rest, they think no more about their souls than our dog Ringgi! Sometimes I wonder what God will make out of such clods when they die, especially the cowherd, but it is not for me to judge. They will laugh at you, Ulric! If you go to worship, you will have something to bear!

In God's name, said Ulric, I am not ashamed of going to church on Sunday to render the worship I owe to my Maker, and if I cannot do so here, I would rather leave. Wages would be too small a consideration for which to forget my soul.

You are right, said Freneli, I wish I could go too. But I will be right angry with these lazy fellows, and then perhaps I shall be able to go next Sunday.

Why has the master nothing to say about such things? asked Ulric; my old master used to tell us when we could go, and when we must stop at home.

He says it does not matter to him, said Freneli, if only they work hard and do not rob him; and that is more than he can accomplish.

Yes, indeed, said Ulric, it needs a higher Power than his, to make men industrious and honest.

Ulric dressed himself for church, and set out carrying his Psalm-book, in spite of the mockery by which he was assailed. They said the new head-servant wished to show himself at Uefligen, and that he would expect people to stand on the benches to look at him, but there were some as handsome as he, and even handsomer! Perhaps he thought the minister would refer to him from the pulpit, but they would soon drive such fancies out of his head! Whether by chance or not, Freneli stood at the door, and looked after him as he went; she exclaimed that the minister was much more likely to refer to profligates, idlers, and liars, so that none of *them* dared to go and listen to him!

Perhaps so, said one; but you have a bold tongue! Shall I tell you what is in your mind? This fellow pleases you, and you think he will take you to church some day! That is why you take his part.

That does not concern you, said Freneli; and disappeared, rude laughter sounding after her.

Ulric had plenty of company on the way, and he found many people assembled round the school-house where the service was to be held.

There is the new head-servant from the Steinbrucke! they said to one another. They wondered how long this one would stay; the others had soon left. If he was on good terms with the servants, Joggeli would watch him like a constable, until he could find a pretext for parting with him. If, on the other hand, he wished to introduce order in the house and farm, the servants would become his enemies, and Joggeli would think he wished to encroach on his authority; instead of supporting him, he would annoy him as much as possible, so that he would be obliged to leave. Then, as soon as he was gone, Joggeli would do all he could to get him back, and, if he succeeded, begin the same old game over again. Joggeli was the strangest man in the world!

Every one had some absurd story to tell of the farmer of the Steinbrucke, and all advised Ulric not to put himself about, but to consider his own interest, and to feather his own nest. These ideas fermented in Ulric's mind, so that he could not fix his thoughts on the sermon. All that he had seen confirmed only too well what he now heard of Joggeli, and his position seemed to him to be so vexatious and annoying as to be quite unbearable; he set out on his homeward way with a mind full of gloom and anxiety; but the sun shone so brightly, the snow was so pure

and dazzling, and the finches hopped and flew so familiarly before him, that a home-feeling came over him, and it seemed as if his old master walked and talked by his side: he almost heard him speaking thus, Do you not remember about the two voices which accompany us through life, one urging to evil, the other persuading to good? Do you not know that the misleading voice comes from the tempter, the serpent of Paradise, and that it always puffs up those who are weak enough to listen to it, and turns them from the right path, only to mock at their credulity when they are brought to humiliation and despair! Remember that a man must resist and say, Get thee behind me, Satan! How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God!

Then he thought of what the men who had come together to be edified by God's word had said to him, how they had persuaded him and puffed him up. He perceived what kind of voices these were, what meaning they had, and knew that he must absolutely close his ears against them. But it almost made him shudder to think of people who assemble to hear God's word, and to serve God, as they say, yet who serve Satan; instead of building themselves up, they pull down others into the abyss of sin. It is terrible, he thought, if people make the way to church a path to hell, and it must also be terrible for a man to possess a heart which turns the word of God into poison, and belongs to Satan, while with his body he seems to worship God.

Then he took courage again, as he felt firm ground under his feet, and blushed for his own weakness. He reflected that a man is too often like a reed shaken by the wind, and realised the necessity of prayer and watchfulness. As he thought of the state of souls that neither watch nor pray, he wondered that there was not still greater wickedness in the world.

In the afternoon, he could bear without anger the scoffs of his companions: they said he should get ready to go to school and say his catechism. After all, it was very convenient to have a parson amongst them: he might pray for them all, but he surely would not expect them to leave off swearing! Ulric had never imagined such profanity and open ungodliness, or thought that any one could be persecuted in this way for simply wishing to honour God's laws. He did not know that those who clamour most for freedom of faith and of conscience, become too often the most despotic when they are themselves in power, and exercise the most pitiless tyranny, as, for instance, in the French Revolution. And what is so intolerant as open ungodliness? it does not tolerate reverence, and it insists so much on freedom of faith and conscience, that no one must profess faith, no one must appeal to conscience! Who does not feel the growing power of declared ungodliness, and perceive the hollowness of its professions of toleration!

After dinner, Ulric went up to his cold and gloomy bedroom, and took his Bible out of his box. The print was large and good, and the binding was handsome; it was a parting gift from his old mistress. He opened it reverently at the first chapter, read the history of the creation, and wondered at the power and wisdom of the Creator. He thought of the boundless space which God had gemmed with myriads of stars. He thought of the earth and its beauty; then of the magnificence of Paradise,

that wonderful valley on which an untroubled peace rested, and which had, as yet, seen no passion, no disturbance. He imagined it like a heavenly Sunday, in magnificent sunshine which spread itself in all its sacredness like an invisible but glorifying carpet over the beautiful garden. He had before his eyes a heaven-reaching dark fir-tree,* with silvery dew, the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He saw golden fruits gleaming amongst its dark leaves, he saw the coloured serpent glide amongst its dark branches, saw him play with the golden fruit, and watched his eyes sparkling with delight as he stealthily enjoyed a morsel. Those eyes beamed like two lights far into the distance, two other eyes met them with hasty steps, the young mother of the old human race approached the mysterious tree. The serpent's glossy skin shone amongst the dark leaves. He ate daintily of the luscious fruit, he coiled himself in sparkling rings on the branches of the tree, and lay rocked in sweet comfort: the young mother looked up with sparkling eyes. The serpent showed himself so luxuriously, the fruit was so fragrant: desire arose in the mother's breast. Then the serpent swayed himself nearer and nearer, rolled sportively the most beautiful fruit to the feet of the woman, and, in sweetest tones, lured the new-born desire to glad enjoyment. He praised, with flattering words, the fine shape and noble bearing of the woman, and railed bitterly against the ill-will of the All-Father Who denied her this joy, lest she should gain majesty like His own. He saw how the sweet poisoned words swelled her desire, which grew stronger and stronger, while the flattering voice supplanted the Father's forbidding word; he saw how Eve tasted in bashful curiosity, how she hastened to share the sin with Adam, how a dark mysterious cloud sank upon the valley and enveloped it in gloom. He saw a waste and barren earth, he watched our first parents in the sweat of their brow, in pain and weariness, hacking the unbroken ground—they, the first sacrifices to the misleading voice, which lures creatures from their Father and gives them misery for their reward.

So Ulric sat in his cold little room, absorbed by the sacred narrative, and his imagination placed all as vividly before him, as if it had been passing before his eyes. He forgot that he was at the Steinbrucke, and seemed to be in Paradise behind an old elder-tree, living through these scenes. Then suddenly the door was burst open, and a rough voice said: Are you there, and still pious? Ulric, although he did not suffer from weak nerves, started violently at this unexpected voice; he did not quite know whether it was that of the Angel Michael driving Adam out of the garden: only after a little reflection, he perceived that it was one of the men-servants. He felt stiff and cold as he stood up and turned to the man. They had all looked for him, he said, but never expected to find him in that cold hole; he must go down to the cowherd's room, and he would soon see what they wanted him for.

This was a warmed apartment in a detached building, all the men and the two maids were assembled there. Some played with dirty cards, others

* Ulric was more likely to have fancied an apple or cherry, as a rustic of any other country would: and the following fancies are above his range hitherto;—nor does imagination ever become a leading faculty in him.

lounged about the stove, and all seasoned their conversation with oaths and gross jests.

When Ulric entered they all roared at him; he must give them a treat, wine or brandy, whichever he chose. They said every new head-servant did so, that it depended on them whether he stayed there or not, and they would soon have him out of the way if he refused them. Ulric did not quite know what to do; he neither wished to spend his money, nor to make common cause with such men, neither was he at all afraid of them; but he did not wish to seem stingy, and he thought he might be better able to insist on his other requirements, if he yielded this point.

It was arranged that they should go after supper to the inn, and those who had no time to dress themselves for church, managed to do so for this occasion; those who were too lazy to get up in right time for the worship of God, and the care of their souls, were eager to sacrifice many hours of sleep for a measure of wine. Freneli wondered when she saw the whole party in full dress and the maids hastening the supper, and she was greatly surprised and dissatisfied when she heard what they were going to do. She could not understand why Ulric had consented, she thought they were making a fool of him in some way, she feared he was already weary of his efforts after reform, and making common cause with these miscreants. She was cross at supper-time, and when Ulric asked her to go with them, she replied, hastily, that she should be ashamed to be seen at an inn in such company. But when he was at the door, she said, Be on your guard, if I may advise you.

They all made up to Ulric as much as possible, and vied with each other in his praise, the carter and cowherd had never seen any one so skilful with cows and horses, and when the boy wondered if the new master-servant was equally clever in mowing, they declared that they considered themselves beaten in advance. If any one threw out a doubt it was a signal to the others to praise him still more.

During this talk they consumed wine very freely, and Ulric could not tell them to stop. They proceeded to advise, and told him he would be very foolish if he considered the master's interest, as Joggeli had most ill-will towards those who worked for his advantage, and respected and feared those who stood up for themselves. His own son was never so happy as when he could play him some clever trick, and there was no sense in Ulric's plaguing himself and others in his service. But if he would be reasonable, he might make a good thing of it, only he must not do as the other head-servants had done; they had wanted all for themselves, but he must share with *them;* then he might get on finely. Ulric could scarcely believe that these were the same persons who, during the preceding week, had lost no opportunity of provoking him. Happily this recollection, and Freneli's words, which occurred to him, kept him on his guard, or he would have been quite overcome by the wine, the flattery, the apparent goodwill. He thought these people were surely better than they seemed at first, and it must be possible to come to some good understanding with them.

At last it was time to close the inn, the host would not give any more wine, and the party necessarily broke up.

While Ulric, with sighs, paid the pretty long account, his guests disappeared one by one, and only the carter stayed with him. Outside, it was pitch dark, and snow was falling fast. His companion proposed to take him under the windows of certain young girls of his acquaintance, but he declined, saying he did not wish to get frozen for the sake of persons whom he had never seen, and he should prefer returning to the Steinbrucke as soon as possible. Then the carter begged him to go a little way round, he wondered whether the daughter of the house close by, had company or not, so Ulric did not refuse to wait for him. Scarcely was he off the road, in a little dark lane, when a club whizzed through the air, and an invisible hand dealt him one heavy blow on the back of the neck, and another on the shoulders. He grasped out quickly into the darkness, caught hold of the hand, tore the club out of it, distributed right and left some telling blows, took hold of an object which obstructed his way, flung it to a distance, and disappeared as if the earth had swallowed him.

Here and there, blows sounded, then voices which said, No! no! stop, it's me! Where is he? where is he? I don't know. Come and help me to raise the carter, he has had enough for this time. I bleed like an ox, but the confounded rascal shall pay for it; we will run before and catch him at Thurli and give it him well! They ran staggering to Thurli, but waited in vain, Ulric did not appear. At last they became uneasy about him, lest he should have fallen in a swoon, and be found in the morning frozen to death. The carter was specially concerned, not because he was less irritated than the rest against the head-servant, but because he had left the inn with him, and in a court of justice, he would be held responsible; he cursed and swore about the blow he had received, and thought how cold it would be in the prison.

In the morning, they were all startled by Ulric's voice, calling them as usual to work. The dog lives! How did he get home? said the carter with an oath to the cowherd. They asked Ulric how he had returned, said they had waited for him a long time in vain; (which was quite true!) surely he must have been paying a visit somewhere. Then his companion told what had happened in the narrow lane, and complained that Ulric left him in the lurch, and only took care to get off safely. Ulric replied that each must look out for himself, and he could not very well help him, when he never saw him any more. The others affected indifference or expressed regret that they were not there to help their comrades. Ulric did not enter into any explanation as to his return home, or make any remark about their various bruises. As to Freneli, she had waited anxiously for the return of the party, but when she heard Ulric come in alone, she went quietly to sleep without troubling herself as to what might have occurred.

She saw in the morning, like every one else, the lumps and bruises which told their own tale, and Ulric said to her in passing, You were right, and I thank you for your advice. But she could not hear more then, and notwithstanding all the talk about the affair, it remained a mystery which no one could penetrate. Only later, Freneli learned the facts of the case from Ulric. He told her how, having repulsed the first attack, he had withdrawn under the roof of a bakehouse, being too old for a desperate fight. There he had recognised the voices, and understood all, then he had escaped while they were occupied in getting the

unfortunate carter on his legs again. He had some idea of waiting for them at Thurli, but on second thoughts he decided to return without risking further disaster. This time he had had his eyes opened, and he knew the people he had to deal with. Freneli urged him not to be discouraged, but to persevere in right action, also she told the mistress what had happened, and advised her to look after the way in which Ulric was treated, or he would be running away when they least expected it, remarking that he was a fine fellow who had their interest at heart, and who might not perhaps be easily replaced. We will try to keep him, said the mistress, we will do all that we can, but Joggeli is very strange, not one in a thousand is right for him.

CHAPTER XVI

HOW ULRIC WINS HIS WAY IN HOUSE AND FIELD, AND ALSO IN HONEST HEARTS

"The man's power is active, progressive, defensive."—*Sesame and Lilies*, § 68.

On the following Sunday the mistress called Ulric into the stübli. Joggeli had driven off to visit his son, with Elisi, who wished to go to a ball at Munchenberg, and who had worried the tailor, the sempstress, and the shoemaker to death with vain efforts to make her beautiful for the occasion. She cried hysterically, and said there were no fashionable clothes to be got there. When she was abroad, however carelessly she dressed herself, the ladies used to say, Oh, how pretty! What an elegant figure! but there people only said, What a pale face! and, You are as thin as a vine-stick!

Ulric, said the good mother, come in and have a glass of wine, and a slice of ham.

He replied that he had had plenty, and he wished for nothing more. But he should be very glad if he might make a request, and if she refused it, he would not take it amiss, because each place had its own customs. I want to know, he said, if I should be allowed in the Wohn-stube * on Sunday afternoons. I cannot be with the rest, I know too well what that leads to. I do not wish to go to the inn; and there is no other warm room where I can read a chapter in the Bible, or write a letter to my old master.

Oh certainly, certainly, she cried; Joggeli will have nothing to say against it, and Elisi will have no objection. I do not say that I should like to have the other servants all the afternoon, but you are quite different. And indeed, if you go on as you have begun, I shall be perfectly satisfied with you, and Joggeli also, I assure you. But you must not be surprised if he does not tell you so, it is not his way, and if he is sometimes a little odd, never mind, but persevere. She asked him to set aside some corn for meal for the pigs each morning, and mind, she added, Joggeli need not know of it. He cannot refuse what is necessary to fatten the pigs; but he is always bringing it up to me, and complaining of the quantity. I use only what is needful, and as he eats pork as well as I, what I ask is no great sin.

Freneli made a curious face, when she saw Ulric enter with his writing materials. What is it? she said; what brings you here? And when he

* Living-room, the general sitting-room of the farmhouse, in which the upper servants were allowed places when their work was done.

told her he had not come without the permission and sanction of the mistress, she went to her and said, I have nothing against Ulric, but Joggeli may take this amiss and be annoyed to see him making himself so much at home. I should like it to be understood that this is no doing of mine.

But what could I do, you foolish little girl? said the mistress; how could I refuse him when he asked so politely? Besides, if he is a servant, is it not much better for him to be there than to be abusing us with the cowherd?

Just so, said Freneli, but if there is any talk about it, remember it is not my fault.

Joggeli was extremely vexed when Ulric took his place in the Wohnstube on the following Sunday, and the good old mistress had many a stinging speech to bear. But when he told her to send him away, and she replied that it was *his* place to do so, there the matter rested.

Elisi was very cross at being disturbed by Ulric's presence; she usually spent the afternoon in taking various articles of finery out of boxes and cases, airing them, and packing them up again. She spread out, over table and chairs, an assortment of corals, silk girdles, rings, gilt clasps, ribbons, handkerchiefs, embroidered chemisettes, and the like; she would hold up one after another to the light, try it on, and appeal to those present as to which suited her the best. Then she would arrange plans of toilette for the following Sunday, which, however, were subject to variation during the six ensuing days. Her parents never ventured to oppose her fancies, because she would cry at the slightest word of blame, go into hysterics, complain of ill-treatment, and wish to die. The doctor would be sent for, and there would be a scene, which they did not care to have repeated.

Elisi and Freneli were not attached friends. Elisi, envious of Freneli's beauty, her brilliant complexion, and all her other advantages, pretended to think her manners and appearance vulgar, and treated her disdainfully as a poor girl whom they kept, out of charity, forgetting how the whole weight of the housekeeping really rested on Freneli, and that without her good management all would have been in confusion. Freneli, on the other hand, did not trouble herself much about Elisi's haughtiness, but pitied her for her silly ways, and her want of self-control; she said a word sometimes to prevent her making herself ridiculous, but it was always taken amiss, and looked upon as jealousy.

Elisi looked sufficiently forbidding when Ulric settled himself at the table and began to read. He was in her way everywhere, he must move to another place, and still she was inconvenienced. She spread her things over the whole table, scarcely leaving room for his book. He saw all the discontented looks and the evident desire to drive him away, and he felt quite vexed as he thought to himself that he had to rough it all the week, in wind or weather, the first to labour and the last to rest, and there might surely be quiet and rest for him on a Sunday. He was on the point of expressing his displeasure, but he reflected that it would be better to take no notice unless he was directly attacked. This was a wise decision; one of Elisi's ribbons fell near his feet; he picked it up, and, struck by the colour, he said involuntarily that it was the most beautiful

he had ever seen. Elisi was flattered by the remark, and unfolded some others for his admiration. He said he was not surprised that she liked to tie her pretty hair with such pretty ribbons; and from that time he found room at the table and favour in the eyes of Elisi. She plaited her hair every Sunday afternoon in the common room, and asked Ulric's advice as to the ribbon she should select.

Ulric was a handsome man, nearly thirty years old it is true, but fine in shape and colour. He had clear blue eyes in his head, and dark blonde curly hair upon it, a handsome nose and white teeth, which the Jews would have stolen if they had dared to take them from such a man.

Joggeli was vexed, and he visited his annoyance on Ulric, who occupied himself in clearing away the rubbish which had been accumulating for ages round the house. The mistress was greatly pleased with his convenient arrangement of wood for the kitchen, and remarked that it was a pleasure to walk round the house now that there was not something to tumble over at every step. But Joggeli grumbled at all this activity, said he had never seen such a meddlesome fellow, he liked to upset and alter everything, and he should not at all wonder if he began some fine day to clear out the stübli. Ulric had just asked permission to clean the fruit-trees, which were in a deplorable state, from moss, manure, and dead branches. The servants quite agreed with the master that all this trouble might have been dispensed with, and complained that Ulric delighted in hunting up work in every corner, on purpose to worry them. As soon as the weather allowed, he went round the meadows, inspecting the means of irrigation, which ought to have been put into good order in the autumn. There were little water-courses to clear out, and new sluices were required. But Joggeli would not hear of the latter, the old ones had served very well for others, and they might do for him, especially as he was so clever! Ulric might have been wishing to ruin him for his own exclusive profit!

One bright Sunday afternoon in March, Ulric told Freneli he would like to speak a word with the master if he would be so kind as to step out.

She delivered the message, and Joggeli grumbled, What does he want now? What new idea has he taken into his head? He is an intolerable nuisance, he gives one no peace on Sundays or work-a-days!

Ulric begged him to say how he intended to manage the spring work, and said that his old master and he had always taken a review of the labours of each season, arranging so as to be behindhand with none. If they looked forward a little, they knew what help they required and how the labourers should be employed. If, on the contrary, they did things day by day, something was sure to be neglected, and they always thought they had more time than they really had; work was left over, and it encroached on the demands of the following season. He would therefore like to know, so as to begin in good time, what potatoes were to be set, how much hemp and flax were to be sown, how much cabbage, and what plots of ground would be most suitable for each. He added that it was a fine day, and perhaps it would be agreeable to him to go round the farm with him, and tell him his plans and wishes.

Joggeli said it would be time enough to think about all this when the snow was melted. He would soon tell him what to do, he thought

nothing was gained by being in a desperate hurry; the farm had been cultivated hitherto without such haste.

But everything has been getting worse, and it will soon bring us in nothing at all, said the wife, joining in the conversation. I would go with Ulric if I were you; besides, a little walk in the sunshine would do you ever so much good! Why should you delay, and give people food and wages for nothing? We have always been behindhand, and how can this be helped, if you do not plan out the work and appoint the labour suitably?

Joggeli grumbled, but drew on his warm woollen shoes, his wife tied his cravat and put a handkerchief in his pocket; he took his stick from behind the stove, and hobbled away full of ill-humour.

Joggeli had never, during his long life, taken a thoughtful review of his whole magnificent estate, and reflected how it might be improved, or even maintained in good condition. He sowed what corn the time, or supply of manure, allowed, and he chose as small a piece of land as possible for potatoes, so that they had always to begin to use them sparingly at the commencement of the new year. He grudged land for anything but corn and fodder, and his wife had to beg, and almost steal, the manure required for the hemp and flax. The cultivated land was not in just proportion to the fallow-ground, everything was in a muddle, here a little plot of one thing, there a little plot of another, no order nor arrangement anywhere.

Neither did Joggeli review his staff of servants, nor arrange their labour in the working of the estate. It is true that he grumbled when they worked as little and as badly as possible: but further he did not go; the land suffered accordingly, and the produce was less and less every year.

This is the case, unfortunately, in many estates, when the possessor does not know how to strike the balance between what the land requires, and what the owner needs, and has no idea of proportioning labour, as to kind and degree.

Ulric had a hard time of it with the old man, who tried to keep hold of each piece of land; he grudged the manure for everything which Ulric suggested, and wished to spare it for some other purpose.

It was in vain that Ulric represented to him that he could not defer the culture of all the land to the autumn, and that there would be a plentiful supply of manure later, so that they might use what was required now. With great urgency he got a larger plot of ground for potatoes, and some for summer wheat, to be succeeded by clover. During his walk, he saw many waste pieces of ground which would supply work for many years between the seasons.

On their way home, Ulric said there was a subject on which he would like to speak, if the master would not take it amiss.

Joggeli answered that it seemed to him he had said plenty already; but if there was more behind, he had better come out with it, and have done.

Master, he said, the stables are in a very bad state. It is absolutely necessary to make some change with the horses, or you will lose some of them, and the condition of the cows is still worse. They give very

little milk, and most of them are old. I think four should be sold, and replaced by younger ones. At present we are feeding beasts without use or profit.

Oh yes, replied Joggeli, we can sell well enough, anybody can sell, but how are others to be got? In these days, every one is ready to deceive, and whom could I trust to buy cattle for me?

Oh! said Ulric, every farmer has to risk it, and any one may be taken in, but I used to buy cows and horses for my old master, and I was generally lucky.

Oh! indeed, said Joggeli, that is what you would like! Sell and buy, yes, yes, sell and buy! I am not surprised now at anything you have said about the stables! We will see! there is something strange in this!

And going into the house he complained to his wife that Ulric bothered and worried him to death. Nothing is right for him! If he could have his way, he would turn the whole farm upside down! He would like to set up both stables afresh, but I see what he is at, and I will show him he has not a fool to deal with! A fellow like that, who has not a hand's breadth of land of his own, thinks he knows better than a man whose father and grandfather were considerable farmers. That is devilish pride, and I cannot put up with it!

But when the good woman heard what were the subjects in dispute, she remarked, Farmer this, farmer the other! Some farmers would be twice as rich as they are, and their farms would produce double, if they were as skilful as many a servant!

However, the work progressed, and every one wondered to see them astir so early in the mornings at the Steinbrucke. When the Ueflige people met any of them, they remarked that they were kept strictly now, and asked them how they liked the new regulations, adding that it was very ill-done of a man to persecute his fellow-servants in that way, they ought not to submit to such a fellow, but show him that they had been there longer than he!

That will go on till he has had enough of it! said the carter one day.

When they met Joggeli, they asked him what all the hurry was for? he had perhaps a new head-servant, but what was right for one place was not for another, and they had never seen much good come of such upsetting ways. He gave too much authority to a man whom he did not know!

If they met Ulric, they changed their tone, and told him that an improvement had long been needed at the Steinbrucke, but he was a fool to trouble himself overmuch, he would never be able to stay with such a man, he himself was so very superior, far too good for Joggeli!

These wicked insinuations did not tend to promote mutual understanding, or to oil the wheels of labour.

Ulric's burden grew heavier and heavier; he felt as if oppressed by nightmare, walking up to the knees in clay. Joggeli disputed and objected at every turn, and when consent had been wrung from him to some simple and necessary proceeding, Ulric found its execution retarded by unwilling minds and unskilful hands. If he turned his back, nothing was done properly, he had to urge and drive continually; he thought he should never get the soil rightly prepared for the flax, and he had to

make unheard-of exertions to induce the men to dig or hoe, or do any agricultural work as it ought to be done.

Country people do not understand being reproved as to their method of labour, they generally think that they do it as well as possible; and a boy, who is working for a few kreutzers a day, will set himself up, when he is told he does not know how to mow, or use a pick-axe, and declare, I have worked for many farmers, and given them satisfaction, and if I cannot work enough to suit you, you need only say so; a fellow like me can always find employment!

If blame is unwelcome from the master, how much more from a servant!

Ulric was quite conscious of this, and wished Joggeli to express his disapprobation, but the old farmer took care not to do that. He said:

If they do not please you, tell them so; that is your business. I should be a fool to pay great wages to a head-servant, and then take upon myself his duties.

Then if the servants complained that they had been overwhelmed with work, Joggeli would say it was not his doing, Ulric might have consulted him, but he took upon him as if the farm was his own.

Ulric was greatly tried and irritated, and felt thoroughly exasperated. What could be done with a master like Joggeli?

Notwithstanding these difficulties, the work advanced at the Steinbrucke; they were as early as other people with the spring labours, although they had planted and sown far more than usual. They had set double the quantity of potatoes, without neglecting other crops. They supported the flax by slender cords drawn backwards and forwards, and fastened to little sticks at frequent intervals, and it was so fine that the mistress went to look at it nearly every day. The people of Ueflige said, as they passed:

It is a pity that Joggeli has such a servant, it is evident that he understands his business, and the Steinbrucke is becoming quite another place; but this will not last long.

CHAPTER XVII

ULRIC SUCCEEDS IN OBTAINING YOUNG COWS AND NEW SERVANTS

"The relation of master and servant involves every other, and touches every condition of moral health through the State."—*Vol. XVII. p. 521.*

One fine morning Joggeli said unexpectedly to Ulric that he had considered the subject, and decided that it would be better to make some change in the stable. To-morrow, he added, will be the monthly market at Berne, where one can generally buy and sell to the best advantage. So you may set out with Zingel and Star this afternoon; go on quietly and spend the night where you like, so as to arrive early in the morning at the fair. Sell if you can, and buy two more cows. If you do not succeed, we can try at the fair at Berthond.

Ulric had not much to reply, though he thought it imprudent to go five leagues' distance with two old cows, and perhaps not be able to get them back again if they did not sell.

It was a warm May afternoon, the roads were dusty, and Ulric had trouble with the poor animals, which were unaccustomed to the heat and the hard roads. But he needed no dog to drive them; the cows knew him, and soon began to follow his slow leading with docility and confidence. As he walked on patiently, he observed the various surrounding objects, the plantations, farm-yards, and fields; and he had a quick eye for anything that might be usefully imitated. When his attention was not specially occupied, he reflected on the sum he ought to get for the cows; for Joggeli had declined to name one, merely telling him to ascertain the market price, and act accordingly. He had at first refused to be satisfied with these vague instructions, but the mistress had said, Why do you hold back? You hear that he leaves it to you. Do as well as you can, and it will be right. Joggeli had also given him some louis d'or, that he might be well provided for the purchase of other cows; and now Ulric amused himself with the thought that he might return these to Joggeli intact if he could sell the old cows, and bring home fine young ones for the same money. He smiled to think how the old man would open his eyes.

Ulric went only four leagues that day, thinking it better not to tire his cows for the morrow, but he found little rest at the inn where he put up. There was a continual coming and going of honest men and of rogues, of dirty Jews and greedy Christians, of buyers and sellers, who were all eager for good bargains, and who anticipated the transactions of the morning by declaiming and chaffering in the stables, the eating-room,

and even in the bedrooms. Ulric did not feel at ease amongst these people with his bag of louis d'or: he put it under his pillow, and slept little, intending to be off very early, so as to escape the Jews who had beset him during the evening.

The morning was magnificent, the meadow flowers, bright with dew, filled the air with their perfume, and Ulric walked on with a light heart to meet the events of the coming day.

When he had proceeded a little way, he was joined by a tall thin man, who immediately began to bargain for the cows. He did not let him rest until he had sold them to him, paying, in Ulric's estimation, at least two louis d'or too much. The man drove away the cows, and was seen no more. Ulric entered Berne with the money in his pocket; he feared he might have acted with precipitation, but when he found how cattle were selling, he thought he had been in luck. He waited at the upper gate, and watched the animals as they were driven in from the rich communes beyond Berne and from the canton of Fribourg. He was at once struck by a young cow, of fine build, thin certainly, but he thought, "Here would be a good investment." She was led by a little man who looked as if he lived outside the town, and was ill at ease in this scene of noise and confusion. When he saw Ulric examining his cow with great care, he said:

You have no occasion to look; you will find no blemish. I have been obliged half the winter to fodder with straw; I did not wish to sell, and people like us cannot buy hay. I depended on the spring grass, but if we use it all, there will be none for hay, so I have made up my mind to part with this poor beast. My father kept three cows, and I have tried to keep five, for the sake of the manure; we never have sufficient.

He did not know, poor little man, that two well-kept cows give more milk and more manure than four badly fed and ill cared for. He almost cried at the necessity of parting with his cow; and Ulric had not the heart to drive a very hard bargain, as he might have done, for no one came to bid against him. Still he bought her cheap; the little man was satisfied, wished him good luck with the cow, and looked after her with tears in his eyes.

Later, Ulric bought another, with fine hair and light horns, broad in the back, small in the head, narrow in the breast; thus uniting all the qualifications of a good milch cow.

He felt as gay as a lark as he drove his cattle through Berne gate soon after ten o'clock, for at the end of the transaction he had three new thalers remaining from the first sale.

How astonished Joggeli and the cowherd would be, he thought. They would certainly bring up to him the leanness of the first cow, but he should just let them talk until calving time, and then, if he did not spare salt, and if he gave her some draughts which would prevent her suffering from the change of food, they would see what a fine beast she would become. He constantly looked at the three new thalers which he held caressingly in his hand, and ended by thinking that, after all, they belonged to him, for they had been earned by his own prudence in selling and buying. Then many considerations came in to support this idea. Had he not spent many a batz in Joggeli's service? and these were never

counted up. Would his shoes have worn out so quickly if he had been less active in his interest? Yet he had received no kreutzer beyond his wages, as all the drink-money had gone to the cowherd and the carter; and was it not extremely unjust that he, who had all the trouble and responsibility, should never reap the smallest advantage? So, if he kept the three new thalers, the master would have no room for complaint, but might be thankful that he had his interest so much at heart, without demanding larger compensation. He would not make the bought cows appear any dearer, he would count so much less for those he had sold, and no one would know anything about it. They had been too dear, the purchaser was a stranger, and there had been no witness of the transaction. But when he thought his reasoning most satisfactory, an uncomfortable feeling came over him, and his conscience told him that he was contemplating a dishonest action. Was not this a suggestion of the devil, a fine cloak for a piece of roguery? He remembered a similar occasion, when he was much younger and less mature in character; he resisted the temptation, and held fast his integrity. Then he determined to maintain his honesty, and thus to preserve the right of directing others with full consciousness of uprightness, for he knew that if he once allowed himself in unfaithfulness, he could not be the same in his influence on others, he could not require of them that rectitude in which he himself had failed. And if the affair became known, what disgrace would overwhelm him! How his fellow-servants would triumph in his shame. Besides, how could he possibly pray to God, his Father, with childlike confidence, if he had weighed down his soul by so guilty an action?

He put away the three new thalers into his pocket, and relieved by his decision, he cheerfully whistled a tune until he came to an inn. He placed his cows in the shade, got some refreshment, and let the heat of the day pass. He arrived at home very early, certainly much earlier than was expected.

Joggeli would not show too much satisfaction with his purchases. All depends on the price, he said. One can never tell how such lean animals may turn out.

Ulric was called into the stübli, and he rendered an exact account of all that had passed.

The master listened with a singular air. He approved of his good bargains, but remarked that he might have done better if he had driven the cows on to Berne; then he said he must divide his drink-money, which he had honestly laid on the table, with the cowherd, and deduct his expenses from the other half.

To this Ulric replied that he did not understand it in that way; such expenses were always at the masters' charge. At that rate, said the old miser, they do not profit much by sending their cattle to distant fairs. Then he paid, with a bad grace, the small sum claimed by Ulric, who had been very moderate at the inns.

You are an ill-guided man, said the wife, when Ulric had gone out. He deserves a new thaler, and you try to cheat him out of his drink-money. You spoil all your servants; they can have no pleasure in serving you well and zealously. Do you not think, then, that Ulric deserves credit for a good sale?

No, indeed! I sent a man who bought the cows from him on my account! I wished to know whether he would deceive me or not.

What a detestable action! said the wife; and I believe you are disappointed not to find him a rogue. Instead of thanking God, who has given you a treasure of a servant, you try to ruin the poor fellow. But take care; if he ever discovers a trick of this sort, he will throw up his place in a moment, and leave you to get out of your difficulties as best you may.

Shortly afterwards, Ulric told the master it was, in his opinion, time to begin haymaking, and there was no reason for deferring it.

You give one no peace whatever, said Joggeli. You are always pushing and driving. No one has begun to move yet, and I see no reason why I should be the first.

Oh, said Ulric, we have the most grass to cut, and if we do not begin betimes, we shall be behind everybody. When people are once behindhand, they cannot recover the lost ground. It is just like a military march: the hindmost have to hurry to keep up because, if they delay just a little, they never overtake the rest. And if a man is behindhand with money, it is hard indeed for him to get straight again.

Joggeli objected and opposed, but all in vain. This time he had to be the first in the neighbourhood to cut grass.

Ulric had been accustomed to work with good tools, but when he examined those at the Steinbrucke, he found them in the worst order. There was not one tolerable scythe.

Joggeli maintained that he had bought several the preceding year, and rakes and forks in abundance. He did not know where they had all gone to, and if they had been stolen, he should be a fool to be always buying new ones! As, however, it was impossible to mow without scythes, and to make hay without forks and rakes, he had to change his mind; but he bought the cheapest he could get. Every one knows what bad economy it is to buy cheap tools.

Ulric purchased a scythe with his own money, but when he made any observations on the mowing of the other men, they said he should furnish them with better scythes, and then he might talk. He had been in the habit of commencing mowing at three o'clock in the morning, but there they let him begin alone, and arrived at four o'clock at the earliest. The cowherd and groom would not help to mow; when they joined the rest they were impudent to Ulric, offering to teach him to use a scythe, until he asserted his mastership, and left them ten paces behind. When the servants were assembled, the day-labourers had not arrived; they came with various excuses—one had to do some mowing for himself, another to get his scythe fastened, a third to help his wife. They did scarcely any work before breakfast, but they thought it unnecessary for the master to know this, and they expected to be paid for the whole day.

Ulric could not have believed the difference between mowing from three to ten in the morning with ten active men, who had good tools and good will, and with ten lazy ones, who stopped on the slightest pretext, saying that what was not done to-day could be done to-morrow. He thought they must be under some evil spell, and they complained of his intolerable tyranny. But if his patience was tried in the morning, still

greater exasperations awaited him in the afternoon. He superintended the sharpening of the scythes, and returned to the meadow with the waggon, only to find all work abandoned; the hay had not been even turned, so precious time had to be lost before loading. If, on the contrary, he stayed in the meadow, the waggon never arrived, and he had to wait also, and the men enjoyed doing so with folded arms. When he sent a party of workers to put the hay in the barn, they stayed there, and he had to go and do the unloading himself, if he ever wished to see the waggon again. In the evening he could get no one to do anything; they were all too busy or too tired. The women of the house were truly sorry for him, but their pity did not much avail, and he felt that all this opposition was malicious and premeditated. Joggeli looked on, not merely with indifference, but with mischievous pleasure, and when his wife wanted him to interfere, and said that Ulric could not manage the servants while they all combined against him, he rejoined:

Oh! it is just as well that he should be taken down a peg; if all went smoothly, he would hold his head so high that the sun, moon, and stars would have to make room for him.

The summer of that year was marked by very variable weather; a fine day would be succeeded by a wet one, so that it was even more necessary than usual to be guided by the wisdom of the proverb which says, Make hay while the sun shines. An experienced farmer knows how to make up for bad weather by redoubled activity during the fine intervals, and Ulric would have been quite equal to the occasion if he had not been hindered on every side. He wrote one Sunday to his old master:

I cannot bear it any longer. I am so angry that I cannot eat,* I feel as if each mouthful would choke me, and I can hardly refrain from laying hands on these rascals. We have still a great deal of grass to cut, and we ought to carry a quantity of hay to-morrow. If the men go on as they did last week, and the master does nothing but chuckle over it, I will throw it all up, and return to you. I lead the life of a dog! It is intolerable to have not only the servants, but the master, against me. The mistress means very well, but she cannot do much; if she had the management, things would go otherwise.

On the Monday morning there was bright sunshine, but there was a prospect of a storm before the evening. Ulric left off mowing at eight o'clock, so as to get the hay dry as quickly as possible, and two loads were carried before midday. At dinner Ulric said they need not be in a hurry to prepare the evening meal, for there was a great deal to be done, and they could not leave off work until late. But the zeal of the servants was not equal to this added strain. As soon as Ulric turned his back, some went up to each other and began to talk; others thought absolute repose necessary. The cowherd did not appear at all; the carter drove as if he had two snails to his waggon instead of a pair of good horses, and when Ulric told him that he ought to go faster, he upset a load into the brook, so that they had to lose quite an hour in getting it up again. When Ulric remarked that he must be blind to throw a load

* Gotthelf must have had some bitter fits of anger himself, to know that sickness. Scott never seems to have had the sensation.

over on a road like that, he retorted that it was his own fault for hurrying and urging, and that as long as such a tyrant was there, nothing would go right. If he did not like his way of driving, he might drive himself. He would not touch the whip again. With these words, he flung it to Ulric, and laid himself comfortably down on a heap of hay. Ulric, boiling with anger, had already seized the whip by the thin end, in order to try what summary justice would do, but he bethought himself, and drove the waggon home without speaking a word.

The mistress was occupied in preparing the evening meal, when she saw him driving the waggon; and she inquired the reason why, with some feeling of anxious presentiment, from Freneli, who had gone on first.

Question him yourself, cousin, said Freneli; there has been a great quarrel with the servants, and if the master does not take Ulric's part this time, the affair will end badly.

The mistress immediately hastened out to meet the head-servant, and asked him what had happened.

Where is the master? he inquired, with pale and trembling lips. He must come out. I have something to say to him immediately.

Good heavens! how you look! said she. Come into the house. He is there. Some one will hold the horses.

She hastened to offer him a cup of coffee, which she had been keeping hot for Freneli, and said, Tell me quickly what is the matter?

Mistress, I will leave, and that immediately. I will not bear this any longer! I will hand the whip to the master, have my wages, and be off to-day! I will not kill myself for others, and be laughed at for my pains.

But who thinks of laughing at you?

Just the master himself, who is no master, or he would understand his own duty and interest.

And what is my duty and my interest? said Joggeli, who entered at the moment.

I want my wages. I am going, said Ulric abruptly.

You have no reason to leave. You will surely stay?

No, master. I will not stay, and I have good reasons. You appointed me head-servant, yet you do not support my authority; you do not give orders yourself, and I cannot give them in your place, so the consequence is, that the men all do as they like. An upper servant is quite useless here; you made conditions which you have not kept. I will stay no longer.

But what do you complain of? asked Joggeli, already rather crestfallen.

I have told you,—just because you are no master. If you had been a real master, you would have come to-day to direct the work; you would have urged and commanded, or at least told the workpeople to hurry themselves. But, instead of that, you left me to stand alone, though you knew very well how things were,—that the cowherd would not leave the house, and the carter thought it a fine joke to oppose and annoy me. That is why I intend to leave.

You are too hasty. I cannot be everywhere at once, and if you had asked me, I would have said a word, but when a man has so many things to think of, as I have, he cannot always remember everything!

All that is very fine, said Ulric, but I want my money.

See, Ulric, said the wife, take another cup of coffee, and bethink yourself. You suit us exactly, and we have never found fault with you. On the contrary, Freneli and I have said to one another many a time, If he goes on in this way, the farm will soon be brought into order again.

No good order is possible so long as the cowherd and the carter are here, and I will not stay with them; either they must leave, or I.

Oh, said Joggeli, when people are too hasty, they are often unjust; you will think better of it by morning, and we will consider about it to-morrow.

It is considered as far as I am concerned, said Ulric. I have borne too much already. You will give them their wages to-day, or me mine.

I will not be dictated to in this way, said Joggeli.

I do not wish to dictate to you. The choice remains with you.

I should soon decide if I were you, said the mistress. There is no need to hesitate.

Yes, yes, but how can we replace two servants at this season, when all hands are busy? It cannot be done.

If this is the only obstacle, said Ulric, it can be surmounted. If those fellows are once out of the way, I can milk and drive, and undertake their other duties, for the time being; and soon there will be no lack of servants. But do as you please. I am well satisfied to leave. I wrote to my old master yesterday to tell him that he would soon see me back again.

This last argument was decisive, and Joggeli agreed to dismiss the cowherd and carter. They knew the old man well, and thought he had sent for them merely to give them a lecture, so they arrived with the most threatening and defiant air which they were able to assume. When he began to speak smoothly of giving them their wages, they said that would suit them exactly, but he would soon see how he could get on when Ulric had worried all the servants out of their places. He had only to pay down their money; they should be delighted to leave; they might have had higher wages long since. Joggeli was beginning to falter, when his wife (who had stayed near him to push on the waggon in case it stuck fast) said, Pay them, then, Joggeli. As they wish for their wages, take them at their word. I shall be glad to have the two rascals out of my sight. I hope they will go to-day. Upon this they both declared that they would not stop an hour longer in such a place; they should be glad if the haymaking was about until Martinmas; the sooner they could get away the better. So Joggeli counted out their wages, they were paid and discharged.

In the meantime the wind began to rise; the clouds were driven rapidly through the sky; black vapours raised themselves slowly along the horizon, like the future of a sorrowful soul; the birds sought the bushes; the fish jumped at the flies; the dust and hay were carried into the air by the whirling hurricane. Outside Ulric exerted himself to get in as much hay as possible; indoors the two dismissed servants counted their money, and laughed scornfully, asking if Joggeli was not going out to lend a hand to the haymakers! The storm increased in violence; gusts of wind blew the hay out of the rakes, and agitated the manes of the horses;* the fair rakers, with aprons well filled, fled like fawns before

* These two and the following lines are worth as many pages of common description.

a huntsman. Look out, cried a voice, and the horses were in motion, pursued by men with forks well charged with hay, which was received by the loader, who was on his knees, with extended arms, at the top of the waggon. Large drops of rain began to fall. One of the men seized the cover; it was on the load in a trice, and fastened down with thick ropes. The black clouds crackled; the dust was driven before the rain. The powerful horses, guided by Ulric's sure hand, stepped out well and willingly, and the load was soon safe under the sheltering barn. The haymakers ran after, with their forks on their shoulders; the girls, with their aprons over their heads, brought up the rear, and amid laughter and jokes, took refuge under the overhanging roof. Then the rain poured down in torrents; the flashes of lightning illuminated the darkness of the barn; the thunder rolled over the house. They all regarded this spectacle with a solemn awe. The Lord thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave His voice. But when they were called to supper, the storm had begun to abate; the rain fell more gently; the thunder rumbled further off: then the cowherd and the groom came down in their Sunday clothes to say good-bye to their friends, who asked in much astonishment what was the matter. They told them to ask Ulric, he was master now, and they preferred leaving to being under such a fellow; they would not stay for any money. They gave their boxes in charge until they should send for them, foretold that the rest would not stop long after them, and went forth like two birds of the night, despising the offered supper. Ulric did not show himself at that moment, but when he heard of their departure, he felt relieved of an immense weight, and the added labour was quite a pleasure. The drags on the wheels were removed. The work advanced marvellously, and the head-servant might have been two or three men at once. He mowed, and attended to the stables; he sharpened most of the scythes; in fact, he was here, there, and everywhere. They saw now what an intelligent man could do—he combined the labours of others, so that they could act helpfully and in unison. Under him the boy became as useful as a man. An evil spirit seemed to have been expelled; the remaining servants and day-labourers were docile and willing; those who had been most deeply implicated in the plot against Ulric showed themselves the most zealous in work, since they had witnessed the disastrous result of ill-doing. They even told Ulric what the cowherd and carter had said and done and thought against him; and assured him that they had tried to dissuade them, being convinced that they would come to a bad end.

These two personages had a merry time of it at a neighbouring inn, boasted loudly of what they had done, enjoyed the thought of the inconvenience their absence would cause at the Steinbrucke, and felt persuaded that they could never get on there without them. One day passed, then a second, and a third, and they heard nothing; no one asked after them; all was quiet and busy at the Steinbrucke; and they began to feel uneasy. They tried showing themselves at a distance to their former friends, but these did not appear to see them. This was serious. They had fully expected to be sent for and asked to return, and they had even considered what conditions they should make!

Then, at last, the groom sent a secret message to Joggeli, giving it

to be understood that he would willingly go back; the cowherd had stirred him up, and been to blame for all, but now he saw his mistake, and he was very sorry for what had passed. The cowherd sent a similar message to Ulric, promising him a new thaler if he managed to get him back into his old place; it had all been the fault of the groom—if he had not been there, he should never have acted so badly, and he could tell Ulric dreadful things about him.

While Ulric was scythe sharpening, Joggeli came to him and said, The groom is willing to come back, he says he was not to blame, and it might be as well to take him. He knows the ways of the house, and another would have to learn them.

Do as you will, said Ulric, but I will have nothing more to do with him. The cowherd has sent to me promising me a new thaler if I will give him a good word, and *he* lays all the blame on the groom. One is as bad as the other. You might choose blindfold, and, as surely as either is taken back, contention and disorder will recommence.

Well! so let it be, said Joggeli, but how shall we do if you find none to suit you? We cannot go on any longer in this way. The farm must be properly worked.

It seems to me, said Ulric, that it has been quite as well worked since those two men went; the haymaking is done early in spite of the bad weather, and people say it has not been so long about as it used to be. I do not see that anything has been neglected.

You are like a powder-barrel, Ulric; you flare up in a moment.

No, said Ulric, but when I have worked so that nothing is behindhand, it makes me angry to hear you talk as if we could not get on without those two men.

Oh! I did not say that, said Joggeli—understand me rightly—but I think they ought to be replaced.

Certainly, said Ulric. I supposed that you were on the look-out for others.

No, said Joggeli. I thought you would find others, as these did not suit you.

I am a servant myself, master, said Ulric, it is not my place to hire other servants, and you would think I was encroaching on your rights; but if you have no objection, I should like to say something to you.

Say on, said Joggeli. You do not generally wait for my leave to speak.

Then Ulric represented to the old man, with as much respect as possible, the serious loss and inconvenience resulting from the disorder which had reigned amongst his farm-servants. You see, he added, that I am willing to do all I can to restore the farm to its former condition, but in order to accomplish this, there must be a master whom all are bound to obey. If you will direct, I desire nothing better, but if not, it is absolutely necessary that another should do it in your name, and only on this condition can I remain here.

Direct them, said Joggeli. I have often told you that is your business.

But you have never told the others that they must obey, rejoined Ulric.

Bah! that is only your fancy, said Joggeli. Besides, one could not at

first trust everything to a stranger. Give as many orders as you like; only don't give my wife orders about her cooking.

I do not desire that, master, said Ulric, but one must be allowed to give orders to the carter and the cowherd as to what they are to do, and how they must do it. If each man follows his own plan, at the back of the house one is in Emmenthal, at the front of the house in the Oberland, close by in Seeland, and in disorder everywhere.

Joggeli submitted to his fate. Two men were engaged with the understanding that they were to obey the head-servant. The old ones went away at last, cursing, not unjustly, the falseness of the world. While they were at the Steinbrucke every one had flattered and praised them; they expected to be snapped up as soon as they were at liberty, but no one wanted them, and they sought in vain for places in the neighbourhood.

CHAPTER XVIII

HOW A FATHER AND SON BRING VARIOUS ARTS TO BEAR UPON A SERVANT

"All work must be done at last, not in a disorderly, scrambling, doggish way, but in an ordered, soldierly, human way—a lawful or 'loyal' way."—*Crown of Wild Olive*, § 38.

So all pulled together at the Steinbrucke, and the mother said life was quite another thing, and it was long since she had been so pleased and satisfied. The quantity of milk was really astonishing. The same cows gave half as much again; formerly they had seemed to be dry on purpose to vex her at the time of any special need. And what can be done without milk? Now she could venture to look forward to the harvest. The butter would not be all used up at the feast.

Joggeli, on the contrary, was by no means satisfied. He seemed to have nothing more to say in his own house. He often walked restlessly about the farm and the stables in search of some pretext for grumbling, at least to his wife. Before Ulric he took care to speak low, but he could not refrain from a few spiteful words, and he indulged himself occasionally so far as to give orders contrary to those of his head-servant.

One day he was walking discontentedly round a cornfield, which Ulric had not yet taken in hand, feeling vexed that it could look so bad, and that he could not blame him for it, when the miller went and asked him if he would let him have thirty measures of his first-ripe corn. Their bargain was soon concluded, after which Joggeli requested the miller to oblige him by offering Ulric a new thaler if he would undertake to get the corn for him at a lower price. I should like to know what he will do, he said. It is not wise to hand over everything. One may trust too far, and then be deceived. The miller promised, and he went one evening to Ulric just as he was reading a letter from his old master, advising him to persevere, and to speak openly and civilly to Joggeli. He said that would be far better than keeping his anger pent up, to break out some day more violently than he would wish. He was no girl; he need not die of vexation or grief. He must be of good courage. Every one had his burden in life, and the sooner he accustomed himself to bear it with a good grace, the lighter it would appear. He must not try to do everything at once, and if he decided to remain with Joggeli, he must insist on the discharge of those persons who would not be led. Then came greetings, and assurances that he would be heartily welcome; they all missed him.

While he was engrossed by this letter, the miller arrived in a casual

manner, and sitting down beside him, began to talk of the improvement which he was accomplishing in Joggeli's farm, praising the manure-heap and the grass, and saying all that was likely to please and gratify him. After this long preamble, he came to the corn which he wished to buy, and remarked that the farmer was a strange man to do business with; at first he wanted an excessive price for his corn, and then, when he was tired of keeping it, he would let it go for half its value. He (the miller) did not wish to wait, and yet he did not want to pay too much, so that, knowing that whatever Ulric did was right for his master, he had come to ask him to get it for him at ninety batzen a measure: it was too much, certainly, but he wanted the corn without delay, and he would not mind giving him one or two new thalers of drink-money. Ulric said that he did not meddle with these matters; he must speak to Joggeli himself. But the miller, passing from words to actions, tried to slip a new thaler into his hand. Ulric stood up, and declared passionately that he must be a dishonest man, or he would not wish to make others dishonest; he supposed he would himself do anything for money, and so he judged of others! But he would not charge his conscience with a bad action to oblige a miller, even though he made him a present of all the corn which he had stolen from farmers in his whole lifetime. Then the miller began to get warm also, and said there were some farmers who were worse even than millers, and if he had tried to tempt Ulric, it had been for another; he had not to reproach himself with ever wishing to make any one bad.

Who could prompt you to such an action? asked Ulric.

I think a sharp fellow like you can pretty well guess.

What! Could it be the master?

I say nothing, answered the miller.

Then a passion of anger seized Ulric; he could hardly draw his breath; scalding tears came to his eyes; he clenched his fists, and cried, So that is it! and rushed up to his little chamber. The miller slipped round to the kitchen, and told the mistress what had happened, remarking that this was a bad business, and she must see after the head-servant, and try to make it up with him. She sent Freneli to see what he was doing, while she went to her husband, and thus accosted him:

You are indeed a most abominable man. Was not once enough for you? You will go on until you have driven away the best servant we could possibly meet with.

You should not trust any one too much, said Joggeli; every one wants looking after, and may change from one day to another. Men always try a horse, and I do not see why a man should not be tried also, when so much more depends upon him. If Ulric had taken the thaler, I should not have sent him away, but I should have known what degree of confidence he deserved.

But, Joggeli, do you think that a fine, honest fellow will stay with a master who is laying snares for him at every turn, or that he can be content in a place where people have a bad opinion of him?

You are still a child, old wife, said Joggeli. People think now-a-days of profit, and not of opinion. I do not know where Ulric would make such high wages. You may be quite sure that he will think twice before leaving.

In the meantime Freneli had gone upstairs, and found Ulric packing his things, while great drops fell from his cheeks, and he made from time to time a half-suppressed exclamation. Freneli stepped in and said, What are you doing? What is the matter?

Ulric was so full of indignation that he made no reply, until Freneli went nearer, and repeated her questions. Then he answered, I am going to leave.

Do not, said she; it is not worth your while to mind this affair. You must take the cousin as he is.

But Ulric said he had not been accustomed to such treatment; it was altogether new to him. No wages would pay him for working himself to death for his master's advantage, when, after all, he tried to make a rascal of him; and he had never once said that he was satisfied.

You only fare like others, said Freneli. I manage all the housekeeping; he gives me no wages; and he would say that he has me here out of charity! If it were not for the mistress, who knows what I should have done before now? But listen, and do not be so vexed. You are on good terms with every one, and all work smoothly and pleasantly together. Only think how delighted the late groom and cowherd would be if you were to go away; they would spread a report far and wide that you had been driven off at last. Whatever you may say, people always believe the evil.

They may for me, said Ulric; it does not matter. I will not stay any longer.

Then the difficult breathing and languid step of the old mistress were heard on the stairs. She was anxious for an explanation, so she went herself to see the position of affairs.

It is well you have come, cousin, said Freneli; he will not be persuaded; he is determined to leave.

Oh no! you must not leave us, said the housewife. What have we done to grieve you?

Oh, *you* have done nothing, said Ulric; but I cannot live with the master; he mistrusts me continually, and tries to make a villain of me; he will not rest until he injures my character. I will not stay, by ——.

Do not swear, Ulric, said the mother quickly. Consider. He is an old man; one must have patience with him; some day you will, perhaps, be glad of consideration yourself. I promise you that this shall not happen again; and if we can do anything to please you in any way, you have only to speak.

You might promise for long enough. I know very well that you would not do such a thing, but you cannot answer for your husband.

Yes, I can, if it is necessary. I can make him fear me sometimes. He shall come himself and promise that he will in future leave off laying traps and snares. Freneli, go and tell him to come up here.

The mission was a difficult one. Joggeli at first answered that he had never gone on his knees to a servant yet. If Ulric would go, he must; he would not stop him by kneeling to him and begging his pardon.

But, cousin, you have been quite mad against Ulric. If you were so to me, I should run away.

You would soon come back again if no one ran after you, said Joggeli.

That is a question, said Freneli; but *he* would not, and then what would become of the harvest?

Well, tell the old woman she is to give him good words, and press a couple of batzen into his hand, and he will soon come round.

She has already encouraged him many times to stay, but this time she can do nothing with him. Ulric will most certainly leave unless you promise him that such a thing shall never happen again. You would see then how the harvest would be got in, while now the work runs as smoothly as possible.

If he were to go, you would be the most grieved, said Joggeli. Then you and he could not have an understanding with each other to manage everything in your own way.

I have no understanding with any one, said Freneli. You must be a very worthless man yourself to mistrust every one else. But do as you will, as far as I am concerned. What is Ulric to me? and what is it to me if your corn is left standing in the fields?

With these words Freneli disappeared, and it was in vain that the old man called after her. Then he took his stick, went slowly up the stairs, and called his wife. As she gave no answer, he went nearer to Ulric's room, until she declared to him that he must go up, or no good could be done. Joggeli said it was a great noise about nothing. He could not understand what he had to do there, or why Ulric was so angry. He had had no bad intention, and no one could deny his right to watch those about him

But you have every reason to believe in Ulric's honesty, said his wife.

Joggeli said he had not much opinion of believing; he liked certainty. When any one had been deceived as he had, and when all had conspired against him, he might surely be on his guard, and keep his eyes open.

That is why I cannot remain, said Ulric. You would never trust me, and I cannot possibly stay in a place where people have no confidence in each other.

You would have to go a long way, then, before you would find a place to your mind, said Joggeli. Do not be so foolish. I will not tempt you any more—so much I will say—but you must not suppose that I shall not use my eyes; men have always need to fear, because the devil goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

This time you have been the devil, seeking to devour me, and that was ill done of you, said Ulric.

Well, I have told you that I will not do it any more; and you should be satisfied. I myself am satisfied. I should not like a new head-servant; it would be difficult to find one better than you. People are worth nothing now-a-days; and if you pay a man his weight in gold, he is not all you want.

Ah! said his wife, we are all poor sinners; and you are also no angel. Give your hand, and let the matter end. Ulric, you have heard my husband; now come down; I have coffee prepared, and you will take some with us; people get better satisfied and more at ease when they can eat and drink together, especially a cup of coffee.

Ulric thought of his master's letter, agreed, and seemed content. Joggeli pretended to be so; but he said in his heart, They all hold together far too much. I must keep a brisk look-out, or I shall be betrayed and ruined.

Harvest-time came, with its pressing demands. This season puts the capacity of the farmer to the test, so many things have to be attended to all at once without interfering with the principal work. The cherries are ripe, the flax and the hemp require attention, while the corn receives due care, as the most important produce. The good mother had always been in a fever during harvest-time. No one gathered the cherries: they were left to the birds; the hemp was allowed to become over-ripe; they forgot to pull the flax, or else to spread and turn it. The servants had time for nothing, though they could spend half a day at once in looking about and considering what they should do next.

But things were changed by Ulric's forethought. All was done with order and facility, and the mistress was glad at heart to see the basketfuls of cherries which were continually brought in, and the hemp and flax spread out in fine layers, for they were very particular not to take the flax into the shade before the seeds were well separated from it.

Joggeli, on the contrary, stepped about everywhere uneasily like a troubled spirit; he thought only of the corn, and could not understand how it could fail to suffer while the other produce was so diligently gathered in. But it was not late after all! The harvest feast at the Steinbrucke fell on the same Saturday as in the neighbouring farms; formerly it had been a week or a fortnight later. But Joggeli had his notions about this also. He was afraid people would think he had not been able to sow as much corn if he got done so soon, because, as he remarked, short hair is sooner brushed than long. But the cause of the change was very well known.

CHAPTER XIX

HOW THEY FEAST, YET SOME ARE NOT SATISFIED

"We are to poison no man's pottage, mental or real."—*Fors Clavigera*, Letter 24, § 18.

THE harvest feast is one of the most important events in Swiss country life. A day on which wine and meat and cakes are in profusion and variety, is it not a foretaste of the millennium to poor day-labourers and their families, who never see a joint of meat, and rarely have a plentiful supply of potatoes?* They rejoice in the thought of it through all the year, and sigh over it mournfully when it is past. The most miserly farmers are lavish on that day, and if they grudge the plentiful supplies, they take care not to seem to do so, for this custom is held sacred in the whole country; it is founded on a religious or, it may be, a superstitious idea—it is regarded as a Christian sacrifice.

The Giver of all good has again opened His hand, and filled all things living with plenteousness. He has blessed the industry of the farmer, and given him the fruits of the earth in rich abundance. The most callous feel some sentiment of thankfulness towards God, and understand that they owe to Him some offering as an expression of their gratitude. Then even the miser gives food for a day and a night to his sons and his daughters, his men-servants and maid-servants, and the stranger who is within his gates, as much as their heart desires. Where the good old hospitable feeling prevails, they invite, not only those who have laboured in the harvest, but also those who have done any work in the house during the year.

When the sacrifice is consummated, the miser gathers up the fragments, uses them carefully, and closes his kitchen and cellar for another year.

A farmer may well rejoice on such a day. His daily bread is sure; he can provide for the wants of his children; his wife can give food to the hungry and drink to the thirsty. He sits down in the midst of plenty, and it is right that he should rejoice. But should food and drink be the only sacrifice offered to God? Has He not a claim to some further sign of gratitude? He has for a whole year watched over the fruits of the earth, which now are gathered in; and shall one day suffice for the thankfulness due to the Creator? Should not habitual thanksgiving be the result of so much bounty? Should there not be a lasting feeling of

* If this be so in a country as rich and well farmed as Switzerland, what can we expect in Ireland? The fact is, no European Government,—and least of all the English,—have yet learnt the primary laws of wisdom and justice in the distribution of food.

gratitude towards the great Giver, who ever sees our thoughts and watches over our ways, by whom the hairs of our head are all numbered? Should we not ever remember that we have the poor always with us, and not only at the harvest feast?

This feast had always been kept in the most liberal manner at the Steinbrucke, nothing was spared, and Lake Murten * might have been filled with the butter that had been used on successive occasions. The son of the family honoured the repast with his presence; he left his inn at Freuligen, and brought his wife and children to partake of the good cheer at his father's house. He did his best to assume the air of a man of consideration. He set his hat on one side, put his hands in his pockets, or crossed his arms with a defiant air; he looked ready to devour the four children of Haimon † and their horse Bayard, and said to all in French, Bunschur! bunschur! (Bon jour!). In that part of Switzerland, German is the language used, and it is considered very pretentious to introduce French words in conversation. His wife was an over-dressed doll, she said, Merci! and looked like a plant which had grown in the shade. She had been an heiress, and quite above working! Her fine dress looked as if it was hung on a post. She behaved in a rude, domineering manner, while apeing what she called gentility, but the vulgarest people were good enough for her if they would listen while she boasted of her riches. She had three children, in whom the qualities of father and mother were combined. They were absurdly dressed, badly brought up, and thoroughly ill-behaved. Sometimes it was Edward who gave a terrific yell, sometimes Rudolph or Caroline. The father would say, Who is making the children cry? I won't have it! and the mother would give them figs and raisins to quiet them. When these were finished, they would all make ugly faces and begin to bawl together; the noise may be imagined! Then the father would swear at the mother for not being better provided, and assure the children that at the next shop he would give them all that they wanted.

Joggeli was always seized with secret terror at the arrival of this family, and with good reason; however, he was outwardly kind to them; and the excellent mother, though feeling for her son and his children a sincere affection, and complaining sometimes that they were such strangers, yet felt relieved when they drove away, because at the end of two days she did not know what to give them to eat, they were so difficult to please. Elisi, on the contrary, was very glad when they came, as her tastes resembled those of Trini, or Trinette (short for Katherine). The two sisters-in-law displayed their finery to each other, described their illnesses, and assumed airs of so-called gentility. If Elisi bore away the palm in dress, illnesses, and manners, she was much delighted, and did not like to part with Trini. But if Trini had the advantage, had heavier silver clasps or a bodice of richer silk, if she had less ordinary spasms, had made a longer stay at the baths, or had aped some fashionable

* The Lake of Morat.

† "Heroes of one of the romances of the cycle of Charles the Great, entitled *Renault de Montaubon; ou, Ses Quatres Fils Aymon.* Their horse Bayard was of marvellous strength and swiftness, and carried all four brothers at once."

absurdity, Elisi pouted and cried, hid herself, and only reappeared when Trinette was already in her chaise. Then she appeared with a delighted air, wearing gloves the finger-tips of which had been cut off, with an elegant handkerchief in her hand and a cap on her head, adorned with fine lace and gay ribbons; she put on what she thought a distinguished air, and wished the travellers "Bon voyage!" "Au revoir!" As soon as they had driven off, Elisi said she was very glad they were gone at last: her brother was a rustic; Trinette had bad taste, and the children bad manners.

As to Freneli, she did not look agreeable during this visit. The guests treated her, not even as an ordinary maid-servant, but with evident contempt, or the son would try to make her the victim of some practical joke. She was also indignant at the greed with which they made prey of their father and mother, and the thanklessness with which they received their gifts. Trinette was not weary of talking of the presents she had from her own parents; she said she could never make ends meet if they were not liberal; her father had given her six new thalers, and her mother ten, during her last visit, and she had only to ask them for whatever she wanted. The good mother-in-law naturally did not wish to be behind in generosity, and gave almost beyond her means, scarcely receiving civil thanks in return.

The children went about meddling with everything and spoiling whatever came to their hands, and at the least word of check, answered rudely, or cried like wounded sea-calves. If Trini made her little gains at the Steinbrucke, her husband did not neglect business on a larger scale. He would buy from his father a cow, which he never paid for, or bring a lame horse and take away the best from his father's stable, promising to send back the one and fetch the other, which he never did. Or he would have an account to settle for wine; he had not the money by him at the moment; Joggeli must advance the necessary sum, which was never repaid. At the same time, he had the most sovereign contempt for his father and mother, as silly farm-folk; he treated them as two money-sacks which are worthy of consideration in proportion to their contents, and he took back to Freuligen many capital jokes about his own cleverness in fleecing the old man. He could not fail to observe the unusual order which prevailed at his father's house, although it was the busy harvest-time; he was still more astonished at the cleanliness of the stables and the good condition of the horses, and much regretted that he had not brought a lame old nag this time. He was no less pleased with the cow-stable and the young cow bought by Ulric at Berne, which was now worth three louis d'or more than he had then paid.

Father, said the son, how is it that at your age you begin to know how to take things in hand? You have splendid cattle, and the whole place is in as good order as if it were Sunday.

Does it please you? said Joggeli shortly.

But the mother could not help saying, We have a most valuable head-servant, who studies our interest as if it were his own; he has as much understanding as an old farmer; and it is a real pleasure to see how all things prosper in his hands.

The son did not say much to this, but he walked about the farm more than usual, saw the last corn loaded and carried, traversed the meadows,

and looked at everything so closely, that Joggeli wondered what he was about, and thought he was counting on speedy possession of his heritage. He had no intention of giving place to him yet; the old often survived the young; not that he desired this, but such things did sometimes happen!

When it was getting dark, there was difficulty in assembling the people for the harvest feast.

Freneli, very red-faced from baking and cooking all day, got quite angry at this foolish and unnecessary delay. However, by degrees the places at table were filled, and all partook freely of the abundant supplies. There were many tureens of meat soup, flavoured with saffron, and so thick with bread that it was difficult to insert a spoon. There were immense joints of meat, salt and fresh, bacon, sliced apples, cakes of three sorts, and bottles of wine, each containing a measure. Sparrows in the millet are well off, but what is that to being at a harvest feast where the table groans with the weight of the food, and there is scarcely any space between the dishes?

Yet this was not good enough for Trini and Elisi; neither the company nor the cookery was refined enough for them; so a special spread was made in the little parlour. They had fish in sauce, and fish fried, sweetened peas, roasts of veal and pigeons, ham and cakes, fancy rolls, red wine, tea for those who liked it, and dessert. The children went from one table to the other, were rude and greedy at both, ate and drank until they could not gorge any more, and then they had to be carried to bed. Elisi and Trini detailed to each other what they could eat and what they could not, and the effects of various kinds of food upon them, partaking at the same time freely of every dainty.

John, the son of the house, did not linger long at the family table, but went out to the servants and workpeople, and stayed with them until the morning dawned. He attached himself specially to Ulric, pledged him, gave him tobacco, and conversed with him familiarly on various subjects, so that he began to think the innkeeper of Freuligen far less haughty than he was said to be. But Ulric was most astonished to see him appear in the stable quite early in the morning, when he was alone at work, and the other servants were fast asleep.

What! are you about already? said the innkeeper.

Oh yes, said Ulric. The beasts worked hard yesterday, and had no harvest feast at night, so it would not be right to make them wait for their food.

It is not every one who is so sensible, and for this reason I have a proposal to make to you. Come to me! I would give you ten thalers more wages, and meat and wine every day.

But what would your father say to your enticing me to leave?

That does not matter to you; leave that to me, said the innkeeper. You cannot remain here; the old man is too queer and mistrustful to keep anybody long. It is quite different with me. I am often from home, and my wife is a fine lady, and I want a servant that I can depend upon; if I could find one to suit me, I would make his situation more advantageous to him than any in the neighbourhood. Decide to come; you will not have to rue it. Here is a thaler of earnest money.

Keep your money, said Ulric. You are in too great a hurry. A month ago I might have given a different answer, but now I have nothing to complain of. They are kind to me, especially the mistress, and when I am satisfied in a place, I do not leave it.

The innkeeper urged him so much, that he ended in asking time for consideration. At this moment, they heard a noise at the fountain, and as they went out of the stable, Freneli was re-entering the house, carrying a pail full of water.

At midday eating and drinking began again, only Elisi and Trini pretended that they did not feel well enough to take anything, yet managed to eat plenty when they were not observed. In the afternoon the visitors went. John slipped a five-batz piece into Ulric's hand, with a meaning glance. The grandmother looked for a long time after her son's coach, and said at last, I love those children, but they are very unruly. If I had them always, they would have to behave differently. Then, as she went in, she said to Freneli, John is grander than ever. Only fancy his being fool enough to give Ulric a five-batz piece!

He had probably a reason, said Freneli.

Yes. He knows it is customary amongst gentlefolks.

No, cousin, he had another reason. I scarcely like to tell you. It is a nasty trick of John. This time he has not cheated his father out of a horse or a cow, so he has been trying to get Ulric away; that is why he gave him the five-batz piece.

Oh! what do you tell me? Oh! the rogue! What is to be done if one cannot trust one's own children? John! John! you are an unnatural son. But it is his wife's fault; she makes him so. He used not to be like that formerly. But how do you know this?

I fetched water in the early morning, because the maid-servants were asleep; and I was surprised to see John, who generally does not get up until ten o'clock, already in the stable with Ulric. I waited while the water ran into the pail, and heard John urging Ulric to take service with him, and to accept a large thaler as earnest money.

And did Ulric take it? asked the mother anxiously.

No. He behaved very well, better than I should have expected. They probably heard me, for they broke off, and I only know that Ulric requested a fortnight for consideration; but I think if the master asks him in good time to stay on, there will be no difficulty about it.

But Joggeli has always a hundred reasons for delay. He says that when servants are engaged for a year, they do their work carelessly, thinking that a little more or less can make no difference.

Yes, said Freneli. He thinks that men are all made in one mould; and as he treats the good like the bad, he can never keep the good.

He must engage Ulric this very day.

But do not, at least, betray that it was I who told you, said Freneli. He mistrusts me enough already.

The old woman sought her husband to tell him what she had just heard, but he did not seem greatly astonished, and only remarked that John never came without getting something out of him; he had always been like that from his youth upwards, but that was not *his* (Joggeli's) fault. Then he wished to know how his wife had been made aware of

this new trick, and she ended by acknowledging that she had heard it from Freneli. I cannot tell you, wife, how I dislike that girl, said Joggeli. She pokes her nose into everything, and there is always a calling of Freneli! Freneli! I tell you she goes after Ulric, and we shall soon have a fine piece of work! Like mother, like daughter. What had she to do in the stable so early in the morning if she was not running after Ulric? Depend upon it that as soon as I can manage it, I will send her away; she has already caused disgrace enough in the family, and she shall not bring any more upon it.

Then you may do the housekeeping yourself, said the old woman. It is not right that Freneli should be blamed for everything. She had a good intention in giving me this information, and I do not understand how you can take it amiss. If we are deceived, it is your own fault, for any one who tries to render you a service gets no thanks, but is immediately suspected. It is foolish to wish to do anything for you.

Joggeli was much occupied by this business; it tormented him like a gnawing worm.

CHAPTER XX

HOW THE EFFORTS OF A GOOD MOTHER CAN MAKE CROOKED WAYS STRAIGHT

". . . To bring at once strength and healing. This is the work of human lips, taught of God."—*Mornings in Florence*, § 96.

In the morning Ulric went to the cherry trees to look if all the fruit had been gathered. Joggeli unexpectedly joined him, and remarked that the harvest had been well got in, and nothing had been behindhand, only he must not trouble himself too much for the women-folk; the corn was the principal thing; the other crops were of less consequence. Then he gave him a large thaler, as a token of his satisfaction. Ulric thanked him, but said, though he knew the corn was the principal thing, he was of opinion that the other produce should not be neglected; everything that was cultivated on the farm was worthy of attention. Then Joggeli said he just wished to ask if he thought of staying on with him. Ulric said he did not quite know what to say, he did not like changing, but he would rather leave than be mistrusted or risk the repetition of what had lately happened.

But you understand that I am satisfied, said the master, and he gave him another large thaler as earnest money, adding that he did not generally do so with a re-engagement, but he could be as generous as another, and he preferred giving his money himself to letting others play him tricks with it.

Then Ulric thought of the incident of the morning, and asked the farmer who could have repeated that to him already.

Ah, said Joggeli, you should be on your guard with those who are most smooth and gracious; they are like cats, whose paws seem to be of velvet, but they can give a backward claw.

After these words Joggeli hobbled away with his stick towards Uefligen (he liked to go there on a Saturday to drink his pint), leaving a poisoned arrow in the heart of his head-servant, who almost regretted that he had agreed to remain at the Steinbrucke.

Who was this cat that pursued him with her claw? It could be no one but Freneli, for had she not been to the fountain during his conversation with the innkeeper? Henceforth who in the house could be trusted? He had been on good terms with every one, but he had believed that specially confidential relations, without any thought of love, were established between himself and Freneli. She was inside the house what he was outside of it; they could materially aid or seriously hinder each other. Ulric thought he was promoting the general good by his good

understanding with her, for he comprehended perfectly that on a farm, as well as in a State, the general interest is not promoted when those in authority pull different ways.

So Freneli was false to him, and accused him behind his back! The thought hurt him, and as it took possession of his mind, he became very irritable, and several times he hesitated as to whether it would not be best to return the earnest money, and go to John immediately. He became morose and disagreeable, giving short answers or pretending not to hear when he was addressed. The mother asked more than once, What is the matter with Ulric? He is quite changed. What has offended him, or who has vexed him? No one knew anything about it. She questioned Joggeli, who began to laugh, and assured her that she need not have any anxiety; he had made all quite right with his head-servant. Then she urged Freneli to have a talk with Ulric, but she refused, saying that she had given him no cause of offence, yet he was more disagreeable with her than with any one else. Either he did not answer when she spoke, or he said cutting things which she could not understand. The cousin must talk to him herself, she was the proper person, and the sooner she did it the better—the existing state of things was painful and annoying.

The mistress went to church once more. It was quite an event at Uefligen. The service had never appeared so short to her: there were so many new things to see in the church; the pulpit had been repainted, some benches had had backs put to them, and there were people present, both old and young, whom she did not know. The preacher's words poured out like water from a fountain. She must really go oftener in future. After the sermon she went to a shop and bought some things, amongst others a silk necktie with a pretty border.

When she reached home, they were rather impatiently waiting dinner for her, for the good woman had been detained longer than she intended by the attractions of the shop; she had much to see there, some bargaining to do, and some inquiries to make. She could not talk enough of her pleasant morning, and she said she must be more diligent in going to church. If only the parson was not so punctual with the ringing of the bells, she thought she would go every Sunday. But she observed the direction in which Ulric went when he left the table, and when the whole party had dispersed, she followed him up to his little room, where she found him occupied in reading his Bible.

You cannot see here, she said. Why do you not come down to us? You have seemed very strange lately, and I cannot make out the reason. You looked after my flax and my cherries so well, that I have brought you a neckerchief as a token of my satisfaction. But has some one vexed you? What is the matter with you?

A gift is not necessary, said Ulric, looking at the necktie with pleasure. I only did my duty.

But why are you vexed? Come now, tell me all about it.

Well, I am vexed with Freneli. She had no occasion to blacken me to the master, and to make mischief because John wished to engage me. I said nothing which might not have been heard by every one, but I do not know how she repeated my words, or what she added to them.

Who could have told you such a falsehood?

The master himself, not in so many words, but so plainly that one could not fail to understand.

It is an abominable thing! God forgive me, said the mistress. Freneli told him nothing whatever, but she complained to me of John, and praised the way in which you had behaved. You are very foolish to believe all that you hear. You know what Joggeli is, and you really might see, not only that Freneli does nothing to offend you, but that she quite approves of you.

What can one do? replied Ulric. On one side it is not easy to understand women, and on the other it is sad not to be able to take a master's word.

Alas! so it is, said the poor mistress; and we must take things as they are. Now, recover your good humour, and mind you do not let Freneli know what you have told me; she would dislike my old man still more, she would show it, and she could not change him. He has not always been thus, but since the servants combined to deceive him, he has become dreadfully suspicious; he trusts no one, not even me. At first his want of confidence was a great grief to me; I thought I could not bear it, and I tried to correct him, but I have gradually become accustomed to it, and I must own that I am not more unhappy than formerly. There is always a something, and if I had not this, I should have another burden to bear. Each thinks his own load the heaviest, and the great thing is to learn to bear it without impatience, and to endure what we cannot cure. The poor Joggeli torments himself more than he torments others, and I have often cried to think how much he must suffer from his own faults. And do you not see that servants ought to have patience with their masters? But be sure that you say nothing to Freneli. I believe she would run away, or fly into a passion with my old man. She is a dear, good girl, but she cannot bear such things.

Ulric promised what she desired, and the good mistress, on her way downstairs, made up a little speech for Freneli, in case she should ask what she had been doing at the top of the house.

The old man wondered very much at the restored peace; he was very sorry for the ceasing of the discord, which he had watched with malicious pleasure; but he made no inquiries, and his wife did not give him any clue to her intervention. The whole affair was a piece of diplomacy which would have astonished Louis Philippe himself.

The work was resumed with more zeal than ever, for all becomes easy to contented minds and united efforts. When these are wanting in a busy time, impatience and disaffection spread to all the workers, and a drag is placed on the wheels of labour.

The fruit was so abundant this year, that they scarcely knew how to gather it There were manure to load, seed to sow, and uncultivated ground to be reclaimed. The style of ploughing at the Steinbrucke had been very slight and superficial; the matted roots in the furrows had remained unhoed; the seed-corn found no loose earth in which to germinate. Much labour was therefore needed to render the land fertile, but the master did not see this, and Ulric had difficulty in getting the work rightly done.

Joggeli was vexed to see six beasts at the plough instead of four, and he did not like the procession of hoers which followed it. He muttered to himself that it was the most ridiculous thing in the world to bury the good soil and turn up the bad, poor soil to the surface. They could not do more if they were trying to make the land unprofitable. They drove the manure in deep enough to go through to America, and impoverished the land that was being prepared for corn. It could not possibly produce much, as any child might understand.

Fortunately he went away just at this juncture into the French cantons, to buy wine, or rather to pay for that which his son was going to purchase, so that Ulric was left at liberty to prosecute the work in his own way. On his return he was surprised to see the corn coming up and promising well, but he said, We shall see what it is like in the spring; it will not stand the winter months.

As they had begun the seed-sowing in good time, they were able to get all the outdoor work finished before the snow came; and they could remain under shelter during the bad weather. The mother remarked that the season had certainly been favourable, but she had known people who never got done even in a fine autumn, and would not if it lasted until Easter—they thought it wrong if they did not leave some potatoes, turnips, or beans, standing out the whole winter. Certainly, if the weather was against them, they could not help it; in the year '16 the oats were uncut at Christmas-time!

The meadows next came under review. Ditches, large and small, were cleared out; and the mud from them was spread upon the land. Ulric even proposed to make, in wet places, subsoil drains, which carry off the superfluous waters from marshy ground, so that the surface becomes drained and fit for cultivation. Many acres of good land are gained in this way, and more might be acquired. But this was too much for Joggeli. They could not do everything at once, he said; it would soon be New Year, and then it would be time to begin the threshing, or they would not have finished by Easter. If they had time, they would see to it in the spring, but there was no sense in turning everything topsy-turvy, and it would also be a great expense, with very doubtful result. The real reason was that he was jealous of Ulric, and he feared that people would give him the credit of all the improvements at the Steinbrucke. The fellow was too high-minded, and thought he knew more than anybody else. Joggeli asked the other servants how they would have liked digging drains all the winter. Ulric had proposed it, but he had refused to set them to an employment which was so hard, and so destructive to their clothes. It was well for them that he was still the master, and had no idea of letting Ulric carry all before him.

Of course, the servants quite agreed with the master in this particular. An undertaking which gives extra work is generally unpopular, for the ordinary work must also be done, and more zeal and industry are required. Many a farm-servant leaves his place when he sees such a work looming in the distance; he says, You may do my share when I am gone. I have no notion of destroying my clothes and half killing myself. This desire to do nothing extra goes so far that many refuse to put themselves out of the way, are rude if required to help the women, and turn a deaf ear to

the orders of the mistress. It is true that some employers try to get too much work out of an insufficient number of servants, and as a camel refuses to get up when it is too heavily laden, so servants who are unreasonably driven must assert themselves. But this does not apply to the unwillingness with which a servant works in a press of business and his tenacious fear of being put upon: or to the short-sighted impatience with which a man will throw up a place if he is urged to move quickly or reproved for spending four hours about something which might readily be done in two. This is a spirit which brings people to poverty, and their suffering is the result of their own faults. They lose the habit of activity, and injure their characters accordingly.

The servants, excited by Joggeli's words, did not content themselves with rude and abusive speeches, but they sought, and easily found, motives for Ulric's actions. They knew well what the fellow was about, but he had not caught his hare yet! He wished to be the pattern servant; he had notions in his head; he thought of becoming farmer there. But the old woman would not be able to manage *that!* To this general proposition they added a number of others, and jokes and taunts passed round.

So it became very difficult for Ulric to maintain order.

CHAPTER XXI

THE HEAD-SERVANT FINDS FAVOUR IN THE EYES OF THE MASTER'S DAUGHTER

"The sun has no 'liberty,'—a dead leaf has much; the dust of which you are formed has no liberty,—its liberty will come with its corruption."—*Two Paths*, § 191.

Elisi had ended by falling in love with Ulric, and she behaved most foolishly with him. On the Sunday afternoons in the winter, when Ulric was reading in the living-room, she was glad to display her finery, as we have seen; he was called upon to advise and admire in a manner which became quite irksome to him; but spring-time came, and broke up these conferences; Elisi missed them, and felt quite dull without them. She had half a dozen flower-pots; hitherto she had not troubled herself about them, and they might have remained always in the same place if Freneli had not moved them into the sunshine or shade, as the case might be. But suddenly she developed a lively interest in these plants, complained that Freneli took no care of them and would leave them to die; and generally asked Ulric, before he could get away from table, to move them somewhere for her; he had to smell the sweet perfume of one or another, and when he thought he had satisfied her, it would occur to Elisi that another place would suit them still better. When the servants were seated on the bench before the stable after work in the evening, Elisi would appear with a watering-can, and fill it so awkwardly at the fountain, spilling the water into her shoes, that Ulric was obliged to go and help her, while the others laughed and jeered openly enough at these foolish manœuvres. If it rained, or she had not the flowers on her mind, she would trip about the bench on some pretext, or she would take a bit of knitting in her hand, and walk rapidly up and down under the projecting eaves to warm her feet, as she said.

One fine day, when they were getting in the crop of after-grass, she put on her sulphur-coloured hat, drew on long gloves, fastened them with a pair of bracelets, and, with her sunshade in her hand, went out just as they were going to fetch a load. Ulric had to choose a rake for her. She mounted into the waggon, and sat there with the sunshade in one hand and the rake in the other, complaining bitterly of the jolting of her rough carriage. On her arrival at the meadow, she wished to rake after Ulric, who was helping to load, but she could not quite manage it; her rake caught in the grass, and she was not able to draw it out again; raking and holding a sunshade at the same time was a novel and unsuccessful experiment; besides, the sun was so scorching! She took

refuge in the waggon, to the great inconvenience of the man who was loading it; as she screamed when she had to give way a little, and was far too frightened to move herself, he had to lift her and her umbrella, like a child, from place to place. When the workpeople saw a sunshade on the top of the waggon, they could scarcely believe their eyes; and they nearly split their sides with laughing when they perceived Elisi under the silken canopy. As the hay got higher and higher, she kept up a continual screaming, but she was determined not to get down; and she drove home on the tottering load, uttering many cries of distress. At last they reached the barn in safety, but the most critical moment had then arrived. She could not venture to descend by the rope at the back or the ladder in front. The father and mother came out when they heard her cries, and the latter exclaimed:

Did you ever see anything so absurd? Who ever saw a simpleton with a sunshade on the top of a load of hay?

Joggeli blamed the mother for not preventing such folly. Ulric placed a ladder against the waggon, but Elisi remained standing on the top, and cried out each time that she raised a foot:

Hold me! hold me! I shall fall!

Then Joggeli told him to fetch her down; he had been silly to allow her to get up. He ascended the ladder accordingly, and offered her his hand, but as she redoubled her screams, there was nothing to be done but to take her in his arms and carry her down. She held her arms so tightly round his neck, that his face was purple when he reached the ground.

This was one of the chief events of Elisi's life, and she dwelt on the moving narrative on many subsequent occasions. Captain Parry's experiences on his expedition to the North Pole were but trifles compared to Elisi's adventures between the meadow and the barn on that memorable day.

Shortly after this, she began to assume haughty airs with Ulric, responding as little to his salutations as to those of the other servants, complaining that he smelt of the stable, and talking of his great horny hands, while she could not refrain from touching them with her thin, flabby fingers.

This conduct was very unpleasant to Ulric, and drew upon him the taunts of his companions, but he did not attach any importance to it, regarding it as the folly and caprice of a spoiled child. He remembered that she was his master's daughter, and treated her with due respect, but the others openly made game of the poor creature, and unsparingly taunted and teased her. She would go crying to her parents or to her bed; Joggeli would take his stick and hobble away from the disturbance, while the mother would try to calm and comfort her; she would give her some soothing drops, and, when she was better, go out and scold the offenders for not letting her child alone. They would generally answer, that they had no wish to meddle with her or speak to her if she was not constantly putting herself in their way. She should stop in the house, and let *them* alone.

All at once Elisi took it into her head that she would like to go and visit her brother. It was a most inconvenient time; her father could not drive her, and they tried to induce her to give up the idea. But she

began to cry and sob so violently, that they feared she would choke, and orders were given to Ulric to take her the next day. Then she recovered quickly, turned out boxes and drawers, and spread her finery about the room, so that she might be the better able to select costumes which would mortify Trinette. Ulric did not much like the expedition; he did not care to go to John, nor to be subjected to the jokes of his companions, who made very merry about his *tête-à-tête* with his master's daughter. At the same time, Freneli seemed vexed and put out, and hastily threw down the shoes which he had brought to get cleaned. This pained Ulric, and he would gladly have asked her the reason, but he had no opportunity. When he appeared in the morning, in his best clothes, and wearing the mistress's fine neckerchief, she said to him, with a mocking air, that he was well got up, but it would not answer. Elisi looked quite dazzling, though not with beauty; she was followed by two maids, carrying packages, and her mother, with a bandbox of things which required special care. She intended to return the next day, but she said one never knew what would happen, and she ought to be able to dress twice in the day at least. As the procession passed through the stube, Freneli took up the cat and walked after them a few steps, with the question on the tip of her tongue, "Wouldn't you like to take Pussy also?" Then she changed her mind, put the cat down, stayed indoors, and pressed sad eyes against the dimmed window-pane.

Ulric sat in front, as a matter of course, and Elisi on the back seat, which was covered. As soon as they were out of sight of the house, she tried to enter into conversation with him, but his spirited horse occupied his attention, so that he could not look behind, and his answers were disjointed, and very unsatisfactory to Elisi. A few drops of rain afforded her an excuse for inviting Ulric to come inside; he declined at first, but yielded when he thought of his new hat. His companion urged him not to squeeze himself into the corner, assuring him that she was not in the least inconvenienced; there was plenty of room for them both, as they were neither of them so stout as her father and mother. She informed Ulric that her mother used to be quite thin in her youth, and that the doctor had said that she also would get stout and rosy when she was married, for she had been a lovely child. People used to stop to look at her. Even when she left home for one of the French cantons, she was the most beautiful girl in the neighbourhood; she had skin as smooth as a mirror, and cheeks like opening roses. She used to sing and play the guitar, which was fastened round her neck with a red and black ribbon; she had such pretty songs. One was—

"In Aargau were two lovers,
Who had each other dear,"

and another—

"Our cat and the parson's cat
Have bitten one another."

She had had crowds of handsome admirers, and she had only to choose the most distinguished. But she had fallen ill, and been obliged to return home; her parents had been very harsh with her, and had made her work like an ordinary farmer's daughter; and she had only common food, such as the dogs would not eat in French Switzerland. Since then she had not

had an hour's health. Then she related the history of her illnesses, until she perceived the little town where she wished to make some purchases. She asked Ulric to stop, and told him it did not rain; he could sit outside again; people would wonder if they saw her side by side with a servant-man, and make a great talk about it, which she did not wish. Ulric felt hurt, but silently resumed his former seat. Elisi gave herself grand airs at the inn, ordered some refreshment for her servant, and gave particular directions, which seemed the result of much forethought, for the preparation of various dainties for herself. Then she made purchases, and said in each shop, My servant will fetch them; and on her return to the inn, her first inquiry was, Where is my servant? She behaved in this manner until they had quite left the little town; then she presented Ulric with a red cotton handkerchief. He said he wished for nothing.

Only look at it, said Elisi.

I have not time. I must mind my horse.

But stop, and come inside, said Elisi.

I am quite right where I am, and I need not mind being seen.

Are you vexed, Ulric? Come, be a good boy. What can I do? It is not my fault that genteel persons are obliged to mind appearances. Vulgar people can do as they please; no one pays any attention; but every one notices what I do, and is ready to make a talk about it. But do not be offended, or I shall not be happy any more.

She ordered, begged, and cried so much, that Ulric at last went inside, for fear she should go into fits. But he stopped not far from Freuligen, and silently changed his place.

Freuligen is a large village, situated in a level country, rich in meadows and woods. It is traversed by a high road, and watered by beautiful streams. The people are rich and arrogant. They are compelled to learn to read and write, and their conceit knows no bounds. Because they have mastered the alphabet, they consider themselves acquainted with all things in heaven and earth. It is worth while to see one of these men, with dilated nostrils, his hat on one side, and his hands in his pockets, holding forth about things human and Divine, as if he represented in his own person a whole university, composed of four faculties and seven liberal arts. If he happens also to have a pipe in his mouth, it is not safe to contradict him. Jupiter with thunder and lightning in both hands, in the act of smiting cities and continents, must have had a gentle expression of face compared with that of a man of Freuligen when he has a tobacco-pipe in his mouth, and some one ventures to contradict him; he pours out oaths with each puff of tobacco, swearing in due proportion to his own sense of superiority, so that one might think him not only a living university, but also a living steam-engine, fabricating oaths wholesale. If these men of Freuligen do hear a far-off truth, relating either to religion, medicine, politics, or law, they place themselves immediately in a state of antagonism; but if a half-witted adventurer brings out the wildest blasphemy, it suits them thoroughly; they listen wide-eyed and open-mouthed, then roar out their applause, and strike upon the table, declaring, He is right; upon my soul, he is right! They are a fearful specimen of a certain condition of mind; they receive only what is false, because their delight is in lies; they prove the correctness of the saying, that it

is only they who are of the truth, and who are themselves true, who are capable of understanding, loving, and believing what is true. This psychological observation affords a key to many facts otherwise inexplicable, and explains much that is puzzling in the history of people and of States. When we see most offensive, violent, and self-seeking men find more faith and more adherents than the most loyal friends of humanity, we find here a clue to the painful enigma.

When the travellers arrived in front of the inn, the ostler came to take charge of the horse; the children were playing about, but they did not move towards them; faces appeared at the window, and then vanished. Elisi stood there in green silk, looking pale and sickly, and watched Ulric handing down her packages, while no one seemed aware of their arrival. Then she decided to enter; the children stared, and did not attempt to greet their dear aunt by word or gesture; when she tried to speak to them, they turned their backs.

However, when they had gone indoors, John appeared, and saluted his sister with the following affectionate words:

Bunshur! Bunshur! What on earth have you come for? I should sooner have thought of death than of you! What, in the name of fortune, do you want with luggage?

He greeted Ulric familiarly, and would have given him his hand if Ulric had had one at liberty. John ushered Elisi into the room which was reserved for travellers of some consideration, and withdrew, under pretext of telling his wife that she had come. His real aim was to follow Ulric to the stable; he showed him his horses and cows, and reproached him for not having taken service with him, assuring him that he would have been much better off than at the Steinbrucke. Meanwhile Elisi had time to look at the pictures which decorated the walls of the inn parlour; they were not beautiful, though they were considered so by some good people who had never seen any paintings except on signboards, church clocks, and wedding chests. No one was even sent to offer her any refreshment. In fact, the mistress of the house, having seen from the window the grass-green silk dress of her sister-in-law, was engaged at her own toilet. She could not appear with soiled chemisette, dirty hands, a bodice without hooks, shoes down at the heel, and a common cotton apron. So Elisi was kept waiting while Trini was dressing herself, and she felt greatly irritated by the long delay. At length Trini rustled in, and said, Bonsoir, Elisi. I am glad to see you; and she replied, *Merci*, Trinette. I thought I was quite forgotten. Trini excused herself, saying she had been hindered by the dressmaker, who wanted to take her measure for a new costume; besides, she had thought that her husband was with Elisi. In the meantime the two sisters-in-law viewed each other up and down with critical appreciation; and while Trini (in proud consciousness that she was the finer of the two) gave orders to the cook and waiting-maid as to refreshments for her guest, Elisi begged to go into a bedroom to change her dress, as she had put on her worst things for the journey. Though Trinette assured her that she looked as if she had just come from Paris, she was not to be persuaded; she withdrew with a maid, who carried her packages. Meanwhile a grand dinner was prepared, and the hostess asked her husband to fetch some Neuenburg from the cellar, but he only brought

Roquemaure, a sour, light French wine, in a Neuenburg bottle, saying to himself, What do they know about Neuenburg? Roquemaure is quite good enough for those two simpletons.

At last Elisi appeared, in a sky-blue dress, with an embroidered habit-shirt, a large brooch, gold watch-chain, clasps like coins on her bodice, and further decoration of little pebble chains, with gilt pendants. Her costume was so new and brilliant, that Trini turned pale with envy. She controlled herself sufficiently, however, to express admiration of her sister-in-law's elegance, but she took care to add that it was very easy for a daughter who still lived at home with her parents to spend money on dress and finery. A married woman, with children, who has to see to the housekeeping, must draw in a little. Neither she nor her husband had come in for their inheritance, and if her own parents were not so good to them, they could not get on at all. They made a great deal, but they also spent a great deal, in an inn business. Elisi was now quite happy; she ate and drank heartily, praised the food, and especially the wine. Her father must get some Neuenburg, she said; they had only Taveller at her home; it came from Bienne, and was sour enough to poison rats.

After dinner she gave her sister-in-law a small woollen shawl, which she received with scarcely repressed disdain; she said it was very warm, and she had long wanted one like it; it would do to wear in the cellar at the making of the sauer-kraut; she had to superintend, though she was almost frozen last year, or the maids would not make it properly. Trini was not in the most agreeable humour, and Elisi felt very dull and tired. Shouts of laughter came from the neighbouring room, and it occurred to her that she might be much better amused than with her silent hostess; besides, was it not a pity if no one in Freuligen saw her sky-blue dress except the spiteful Trini, and the stupid waiting-maid, who had not testified her admiration by a single remark? And what might not result? It was no wonder that a suitable match did not occur for her, when she was never seen! Now that she was for once away from the Steinbrucke, she would profit by the opportunity. But she gained nothing by beating about the bush with Trini, and when she asked of whom the company consisted, Trini replied, Oh! it is some pig-drivers from Lutern and Eschlismat. Elisi said she wished to speak to her servant; and when Trini proposed sending for him, she declined, said she would not give trouble, stood up, and opened the door of communication.

The room was full, certainly not of pig-drivers from Lutern, but of the old and young men of Freuligen, who swore and laughed as they sat at their usual evening occupations of smoking, drinking, and playing. Ulric, as guest, was treated by John to tobacco and wine; Elisi tapped him on the shoulder, and told him she wished to leave early in the morning; he should give the horse a feed in good time. A merry overseer of the commune, who sat on the opposite side of the table, asked who was that pretty young lady; might he venture to offer her a glass of wine? One word led to another. Elisi sat down in an empty place, and enjoyed the jokes of old and young; she did not say much, but simpered and used her fine handkerchief in an affected manner, so as to display the rings on her fingers. She remained there for quite two hours, and entirely forgot her sister-in-law. But at last she went to rejoin her. Trinette had gone to bed, leaving word with the waiting-maid that she had toothache. Perhaps

she was offended, said Elisi. The maid said she did not know;—she had been very queer; and here a long conversation about Trinette would have followed if the cook had not gone to the door and summoned the maid with an oath, because she did not fetch the soup, and the supper was getting spoiled.

When the meal was served, John brought Ulric, and swore when he saw the table laid only for two, declared that the stupid maid could not count, and that his wife was the laziest dawdle in the whole canton. He treated Ulric like an old comrade, and pressed him to eat and drink, but behaved with much less civility to his sister; he made rude jokes at her expense, and said, amongst other things, she had not hooked a husband yet, but it was not for want of trying; she had better learn to make soup and knit stockings; then she might have a better chance. Perhaps Ulric would take you, he added, if you were to ask him. With such brotherly sallies the innkeeper spiced the meal.

Ulric went down early the next morning, and, to the great dismay of the servants, their master appeared only a little later. John got into a terrible passion when he discovered that they were in the habit of taking their ease, while he believed that they were doing their work. He found that his own example of laziness had been followed, and swore at the state of things which his early rising revealed to him; but as he lay in bed the next morning until nine o'clock, he might have spared his breath. How can people rise early when they spend half the night at drink and play? And what are servants likely to do if the master and mistress do not appear until the morning is far advanced?

Nowhere are the consequences of ill-doing more prompt and sure, than in an inn which is kept open late into the night. The innkeeper who joins his customers in midnight revels is not likely to have clearness of mind to watch over his interests; he loses by neglect far more than he gains; he walks straight into ruin of body and soul, prepares for himself an old age of misery, smooths for his children a pathway to wickedness, and frequently ends by begging his bread.

John thundered and swore as long as his amazed servants were in his sight; they had not cleared out the guest-room, nor milked the cows, nor rubbed down the horses; and while he and Ulric were on the way to his land, which he wished to show him, he complained bitterly of them all, and said he would give a hundred thalers to one on whom he could depend. He was not acquainted with the proverb: Like master, like man, and he did not know that a bad master never keeps good servants; some become bad under him, and those who wish to remain good are obliged to leave him.

When the two men re-entered, they found Elisi waiting for them, looking very cross, and dressed in a sulphur-coloured bodice and apron. Trini had sent to excuse herself, as she had slept badly. They had breakfast at half-past nine of cakes from the preceding day, butter, cheese, cream, coffee, and beautifully white bread. Elisi said nothing of having the horse put in; she walked about the house and on the terrace, displaying herself, her gloved hands, and her fine pocket-handkerchief, while John took Ulric into his cellar. The clock struck eleven, and then Elisi beckoned to the latter. She would go and change her dress, and as soon as she was ready, he must put the horse in. Nearly an hour passed before she reappeared in grass-green. And who sat there, magnificent in

chocolate-coloured silk, with gold and silver ornaments, but Trini herself? —Trini, who wished to show that she also could dress well, though she was no longer an unmarried daughter, living with her parents. Elisi became livid; she could scarcely form her mouth to a Bonjour and an inquiry after the toothache. Trini was friendliness itself, wished Elisi to give her another day, and finally persuaded her to stay for dinner. The best of everything was put on the table, but it did not taste half so good to Elisi as on the preceding day—the food stuck in her throat as she looked at Trinette, and the so-called Neuenburg had quite a different taste. She took advantage of the first opportunity to hasten her departure.

When Elisi's various packages were stowed away, and she was settled inside, Ulric was getting up outside, when John interfered, said the weather was bad, and he would be a fool not to get under cover; he and Elisi would not eat one another! So Ulric had no alternative. His companion drew back as far as she could into the corner of the chaise, and did not speak until they were at a safe distance from Freuligen. Then she revived and spoke out angrily against her brother and sister-in-law; he was a coarse, rude man, she was a bad wife, and almost a fool; their servants were worthy of them both. She would be very foolish to remain unmarried for the sake of people who only made game of her, who spent much and earned little, and who thought of nothing but eating and drinking and gratifying their own fancies. She would not like her money to pass into such hands. She would rather marry the first man she met, than leave them a kreutzer. When once her father and mother were dead, she knew what she would have to expect; they would keep her under lock and key until they were sure of her money. But she was cleverer than they thought, she would cut into Trinette's chocolate gown, and a daughter who was heiress to fifty thousand florins would not let herself be played with in that way. She did not want a rich husband, but she wanted one who was handsome and kind, and who would make her happy. As to her parents' consent, that need not be taken into account, for she was sure to get her own way if she cried and made a noise about it. She had already refused several matches, because they were not to her taste; and those simpletons at Freuligen thought she was not going to marry. But they should soon see that they were mistaken. She would take the first who offered.

Ulric might have made a declaration then and there, but he remembered that his master's daughter sat beside him. He did not take any advantage of her advances, or seem aware that her hints might apply to himself.

Elisi chose to pass by the little town where she had distinguished herself on the preceding day, and to stop at an unknown place; this time she had Ulric with her, and treated him to the best of everything in the private room which she had requested for herself. She was still more agreeable during the rest of the drive, and Ulric could not but conclude that he had only to make her an offer in order to be accepted with eagerness. We may suppose that the matter would have come to a crisis on that very day if the conversation had not been rudely interrupted by a plunge of the horse, which bolted towards a cornfield. After that, Ulric had enough to do to hold him in check, and Elisi was dreadfully frightened, so the tender strain could not very well be resumed.

CHAPTER XXII

ULRIC BECOMES CLEVER IN RECKONING

"The attraction of riches is already too strong."—*Unto this Last*, § 55.

This little journey to Freuligen had serious consequences for Ulric. He became gradually accustomed to the notion of securing his happiness by marrying a rich wife. For, however foolish and mistaken, it is a common idea that riches and happiness mean the same thing. It is often said: There is a happy man! He has just married a fortune of ten thousand gulden. His wife is a simpleton, it is true, and he has much to bear from her, but he has money, and that is the main thing! Ulric was not free from this delusion, and he thought, from Elisi's behaviour, that she would accept him if he duly proposed for her. Her brother had treated him with friendly confidence, and he probably would not make much objection; or, if his sister *would* marry some one, he might prefer him to another. The parents would be displeased at first, but he would be able to commend himself to them in the end. He was fascinated by the thought of being one day farmer at the Steinbrucke, and he often reckoned up to see how rich he would be in twenty years; *he would show the whole neighbourhood what could be accomplished by good farming.* He revolved certain plans in his mind, then fancied to himself what the parson would say when he went to announce his marriage to the rich daughter, *what the people in his old home would say when he should go there in his own chaise, as the possessor of six horses and ten cows, and the best of everything.* It is true that a gloom came over his thoughts when they turned to Elisi's sickly looks and slovenly ways. She would be of no use in housekeeping; her temper was fitful; she had no notion of order nor economy. But she might improve when she was married, and they would be rich enough to keep plenty of servants. So it would not much matter if she did nothing herself.

All this passed in Ulric's mind only, but the most secret things come at length to light. The journey had made Ulric and Elisi more familiar, and she looked at him as if some understanding existed between them. He certainly avoided these looks, especially when Freneli was near, for though Elisi's riches attracted him more and more, Freneli seemed to him prettier and cleverer every day. It would be best, he thought, to keep Freneli with them to do the housekeeping! *

* Ulric's cleverness in reckoning does not quite reach so far as to enter into Freneli's mind on the matter;—let us give him at least some credit for his modest dulness. But from first to last Gotthelf carefully keeps him at the low Swiss

Elisi was so imprudent and unreserved that she might easily have been led to compromise her reputation. But Ulric was honourable; if he wished to earn the hand of his master's daughter, *it was quite against his principles to mislead her.* He worked more zealously than ever, tried to make the estate as productive as possible, that he might commend himself to her parents as one who was not rich, indeed, but who could not fail to become so. He did not think of the terrible words, He is only a servant! The servants very soon perceived how matters stood, and more than ever they attributed the zeal of the head-servant to interested motives. Now they tried to thwart him in every possible manner, arranged tricks and surprises, invented wicked stories, and caused him so much annoyance and vexation that he often wished himself a hundred miles away from the Steinbrucke. Elisi's behaviour was so forward and foolish that her parents at last observed it. Joggeli grumbled, and said they could see plainly enough now what Ulric was after, but he would put him out in his reckoning. At the same time, he did nothing; and rather enjoyed the idea that it would vex his son greatly if Elisi took it into her head to marry.

The mother laid it more to heart: she represented to her daughter that she was acting wrongly towards Ulric, while making herself talked about in this way; it was most unsuitable for a rich farmer's daughter to give encouragement to the hopes of a servant-man. It was not that she had anything against Ulric, but Elisi would not like to accept a man in his position. Then Elisi began to sob and cry, saying that nothing she did was right for her parents; sometimes she was too proud, sometimes too familiar. Because she said a pleasant word to a servant-man, they treated her as if she had committed a crime. The mother sometimes complained to Freneli that she did not know what to do for the best. As to Ulric, she could not find fault with him, he conducted himself with propriety, and she thought he was not much pleased by Elisi's forwardness. Considering all things, she could not decide to send him away, for if she did so, Joggeli would be the first to reproach her for having deprived him of the best possible servant, on account of her absurd fancies. Meantime Freneli must have an eye to what passed, and tell her if she noticed anything special. But the poor mother found little consolation with Freneli, who seemed quite indifferent when she spoke on this subject.

But Freneli's greatest difficulty lay in her own behaviour towards Ulric, who, being much drawn to her, could not bear her short answers and grave looks, and did all he could to conciliate her. He often avoided Elisi, and certainly never sought her; he sought Freneli, and rarely found her, while Elisi was always accessible. Freneli wished to behave coldly to him, but it was sometimes difficult to her to preserve her dry and distant manner with a man who was so full of kindness and cordiality towards

level which gave cause for the proverb "Point d'argent, point de Suisse," while Freneli belongs wholly to the high angelic world, having the heart and mind of which it is written, "The gold and the crystal shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold."[1]

[1] [Job xxviii. 17.]

herself. Sometimes she could not help laughing and talking with him for a few minutes; and if Elisi chanced to be aware of it, terrible scenes ensued.

Of course this affair caused a great deal of talk in the neighbourhood, and many inventions were added to the facts. There were two parties. One grudged the clever Ulric to the parents; the other grudged the rich wife to Ulric. More than a year passed, and the marriage seemed more probable as time went on, so the servants and day-labourers, beginning to believe in it, acted accordingly, and tried to commend themselves to the future master. The consequence was, that the farm became so flourishing, that it would have been impossible to Joggeli to deprive himself of a man who was so skilful in utilising their services. He knew well the meaning of twenty more loads of hay or a thousand more sheaves of corn, which resolved themselves into pieces of money in his purse, so he took good care not to show any dissatisfaction; he said to himself he would avail himself of Ulric's designs as long as possible; when the matter became more serious, he would look into it.

John, the innkeeper, arrived one fine day, and made a great deal of noise about the reports which had reached him; he demanded Ulric's immediate dismissal, but Joggeli would agree to nothing of the kind. As long as he lived he would be master there, and if John had been able to entice Ulric away, he would have thought him everything that was good. What passed at the Steinbrucke was no concern of his, and if they thought proper to give Elisi to the head-servant, he need not trouble himself; anyway, he would not inherit alone from his parents; he had fleeced them enough already. The more John swore and the more passionate he became, the more Joggeli maintained that Elisi should marry, if not Ulric, some one else; and as to John, his relations knew well how affectionately he regarded them; that is to say, that if he could once get hold of their money, he would care very little what became of them, and Elisi would be quite at liberty to marry a gipsy, a heretic, or a Jew. All this in Joggeli's husky, asthmatical voice sounded so alarming, that his wife thought she had better interfere; she said John need not disturb himself about a thing which would never happen; she (the mother) was still there; Elisi would not demean herself, and Ulric was an honourable man. The innkeeper wished to see him, but he was not to be found, and they said he was engaged about the cattle. Trinette had accompanied her husband in a pale yellow costume, still more beautiful than that worn by Elisi during her last visit at Freuligen; she treated her sister-in-law with great contempt, saying to her, Fie! for shame! How common you make yourself! You think of marrying a servant-man! It makes me quite ill; it is a disgrace to the whole family. If my parents could have foreseen it, they would never have consented to my marrying John. They did not like it as it was, but I was foolish, and I would have him. You can never be counted as belonging to the family, and you can't stay here; do you understand? Oh! for shame! I cannot bear to look at you.

But Elisi was not ashamed, and her tongue was quite equal to Trinette's; she said she would do just as she liked; she abused her sister-in-law and attacked her reputation, said she would rather marry a servant-man, than make herself the talk of Freuligen by her misconduct. If the good mother

and Freneli had not managed to separate the sisters-in-law, they would certainly have come to blows; and the grass-green and pale-yellow costumes might have suffered in the fray.

John and his wife soon returned to Freuligen. They stopped at inns on the way, and hastened to relate to their good friends what had passed at the Steinbrucke, thus giving authority to the current reports.

Shortly after this, Ulric went to a fair to sell a horse; he could not get as much as he wished; so he took him out of the market, and put up at an inn. Whom should he meet there but his old master, Farmer Boden? Ulric put out his hand with undisguised pleasure, and said how glad he was to see him and to have the chance of a little talk with him. The master was less demonstrative, and spoke of being very busy; but at length proposed a bottle of wine with Ulric. He began the conversation by asking if there was much hay about the Steinbrucke. Ulric replied in the affirmative, and inquired in return if the corn at Muhliwald had suffered; a good deal of theirs had been laid by the recent wind. At last, after beating well about the bush, Bodenbauer made up his mind, and said to Ulric, Things go well with you, it seems; I have been told that before long *you* will be the paysan of the Steinbrucke.

Who says that?

Oh, almost every one. It is a general report, and people say it is quite settled.

People always know more than the persons concerned.

But there is something in it? asked Bodenbauer.

I do not pretend that there is not; but all is vague and doubtful, and it is an affair that may be decided either way.

It seems to me that it is high time to decide it some way.

How?

Well, the girl can hardly do otherwise, according to what people say.

It is a wicked calumny, cried Ulric. Did you think for a moment that I would disgrace myself so far as to ensure a rich marriage by such means?

I was mistaken, then, said his old master. I thought you would want me to be your advocate with the parents, and for that reason I was sorry to meet you. I am relieved by what you tell me. I should have been grieved if you had acted basely. But was there not some foundation for the reports?

Yes, said Ulric. I do not deny that Elisi likes me, and I think I could persuade her to marry me if I set myself to it. To speak frankly, I think it would be a rare chance for me.

A rare chance—of a pale, sickly girl who is obliged to go into the house as soon as the wind blows, for fear it should blow her away?

It is true that Elisi is not pretty; she is thin and unhealthy, said Ulric; but the doctor says she will improve when she is married. She will have fifty thousand gulden.

Does she always dawdle about, or can she stir herself, and attend to the housekeeping?

She does not work much, nor cook; but she can knit, and make all kinds of pretty things out of glass beads. But if she had the farm, we could keep a cook, and she need only superintend a little.

Proper superintendence requires knowledge and intelligence. A little help from a mistress does not take the place of clear and capable direction. She might, for example, knit all day in an apothecary's shop without knowing that poisons were being prepared. Besides, I thought that Joggeli's daughter had a cross face, and was not in the habit of receiving visitors graciously?

It is true, replied the poor Ulric, that she is wanting in many ways, and she is very sensitive; but a good husband might arrange accordingly. You must not think that Elisi has never a kind word to say to any one; she can make herself agreeable when she likes. If the farm is worked as it ought to be, it should produce at least ten thousand sheaves of wheat, besides barley and oats.

That is much, said John, and there are few such farms in the canton. But really, if I had the choice of a foolish wife with a fine estate and my liberty without the estate, I should not hesitate for a moment. It is a grand thing to be rich, if you will, but riches do not make happiness; and if a man has an ill-favoured creature at home, who is spiteful and disagreeable about everything, he fears to return, as if the plague were in the house; and if he once begins to seek his happiness elsewhere, he is in a bad way indeed.

But, said Ulric, you have never ceased exhorting me to save money, telling me that a man can *be* nothing if he *has* nothing.

That is quite true, and I repeat it. It is far better to save money than to spend it in bad ways; and a man is very worthless who in good times makes no provision in case of need. If he does not begin his career well, he rarely ends well. An honest man who has saved money can marry better than a ragamuffin, and can choose a wife to his taste, but the richest woman is not always the most suitable, and there are some I should prefer without a kreutzer to an heiress of fifty thousand gulden. All depends upon the person. Do as you will, but bethink yourself well before you decide.

It is only too true, said Ulric, that Elisi is thin and sickly, but she may change; one sees many slender girls who become stout in later life. Besides, she is not really bad. She certainly does not know what she is saying when she is angry; she reproaches me with courting others, and with being only a servant; but when the storm is over, she is quite kind and good-hearted. She has given me I don't know how many presents, and I might have had more if I would.

Do as you will, repeated Bodenbauer, but once more I say, Reflect well before you act. So unequal a union is rarely happy, especially in the case of a servant and a master's daughter. I speak because I take a real interest in your fate, and I would not have said so much to another. Now I must go. Come and see us when you have time, and we will talk further of this matter, if it is not too late.

Ulric looked after his late master with great dissatisfaction, and said to himself, I could not have believed that he would grudge me my good fortune, but all paysans are alike; they cannot bear to see any one rise to their level. John is one of the best, yet he dislikes the idea of his old servant becoming richer than he is. What did it matter to him whether Elisi is ugly or not? He did not think of beauty only when he chose

his wife. These farmers consider it a crime if you venture to aspire to one of their daughters, though she might in many cases be happier married to a kind and well-conducted servant-man, than living at home all her life as a farmhouse drudge. But he did not try to turn me from it; things had gone too far for that. There must be an end to this state of things, however; I must not be kept hanging on in this way any longer.

He resolved to tell Elisi that she must speak to her parents, the wedding must be fixed for the autumn, or he would leave at Christmas; he would not be made a fool of.

CHAPTER XXIII

HOW A JOURNEY TO A WATERING-PLACE PUT OUT A RECKONING

"Insolent and loveless pride."—*Sesame and Lilies*, § 69.

Ulric considered, as he rode home on the bay horse, whether the farm would really fall to his share, or whether John would leave the inn and take to it. He thought he and his wife were too much accustomed to a public life to be able to live in a place so retired as the Steinbrucke. He knew that Joggeli possessed forty thousand gulden, variously invested, and that John had already had several advances,—circumstances which seemed to favour his desires. He began to estimate the incomings of the farm, and the produce of wood and stable; he reckoned the expenses of house-keeping and labour; allowed for bad years, and came to the conclusion, that if he was free from rent and other charges, he could put by, each year, nearly four thousand francs. If God spared him for twenty-five years, he would have the worth of the farm in money at interest, and he would have something to answer to any one who brought up to him his wife's fortune. He could say that there was no merit in inheriting money, but it was something to make fifty thousand gulden, and Elisi might have taken many a rich man who after twenty-five years would have been rather embarrassed if called upon to produce even as much as she had inherited.

These thoughts made the way seem very pleasant to Ulric, and the bay horse neighed at the stable before he was aware that he was already at home. Elisi soon found him, and inquired what he had brought her. Ulric unfolded papers of figs, almonds, and chestnuts, and at the same time said he should like to know how he stood with her; he could not go on as they were; he made himself the laughing-stock of the neighbourhood. Either they must be married, or he should leave. Elisi said it was for her to say when they should be married: she might fix the following Sunday, if her parents contradicted and vexed her; or if her brother came again and said a single word of reproach to her, she would run at once to the parson to hasten the publication of the banns. But she could not possibly think of such a thing just then: her mother had promised to take her for a week or fortnight to Gurnigel, the famous watering-place. She must have the sempstress, the tailor, the shoemaker; she was quite distracted with all the things she had to think about; she had to go hither and thither to make purchases; how could she possibly prepare for a wedding? When Gurnigel was done with she would see about it.

The mother often said she wished they were already at Gurnigel, or

that nothing had been said about going; she thought the girl would lose her senses. When she wished to pack her own things, all the trunks and boxes had already been appropriated by Elisi. She tried at first to induce her to take fewer things, suggested that there was no need for six different costumes, and that two bodices would be quite sufficient, but instead of withdrawing anything, the girl would bring more bodices, more costumes, and underskirts without number. Joggeli had a malicious pleasure in looking on, and advised her to send for a wardrobe from Berne, they had some there which were like small bakehouses, with cupboards and drawers in them; she would find one very convenient, and her things would not get crushed. Elisi liked the idea very much, and wished Ulric to go for one immediately; but this was too much for the poor mother, who would not allow it, though Elisi cried and made a great disturbance. The mistress did not wish to be laughed at wherever they went. What would they say at Gurnigel to see them arrive with such luggage, and where could it be placed? It was quite enough to go about with such a simpleton as Elisi, without having also a case as large as a house! She would not go at all if the doctor had not ordered it, and if she was not afraid the girl would go out of her mind. Her husband was always the same; instead of checking Elisi, he made a joke of her folly. She knew he would be better pleased if they did not go, and he always grudged her every kreutzer, though she had not come to him empty-handed. Joggeli said she had the girl as she had brought her up, and as she had spoiled her, she must make the best of her.

But, she replied, who buys her such a foolish quantity of fine clothes? Who arranged her stay in French Switzerland, where she picked up so many nonsensical ideas? Certainly not I, but you always like to blame others,—you speak when you ought to be silent, you are silent when you ought to speak.

Ulric could not be well pleased by the journey to Gurnigel, but he had to help in Elisi's preparations for departure. If he hazarded the least objection to anything she wished to take, a fearful storm broke over him. She could see very well what to expect from him in the future, he was already eager to contradict her! The only thing he could do to restore her to good humour was to make a large case, give it to her to fill, and then send it on secretly to Gurnigel. She promised to talk to her mother about the marriage during their absence, she would give her no peace nor comfort until she consented to it, and the banns should be published at Martinmas.

The mother had now room for her modest requirements. She thought warm clothing might be necessary, but Elisi was not to be persuaded to take woollen stockings: she declared that she was never cold when she was enjoying herself. The mother provided also a supply of good coffee, which was utterly despised by Elisi, who said they should get better things than coffee at Gurnigel!

Good coffee is the main thing, said the mother; it is generally bad at such places, and one is glad to have a good cup to offer to an acquaintance.

She remarked also, that instead of so many clothes she would like to take a milch cow with them—she had heard that the cream at Gurnigel was as blue as Elisi's dress!

When the little chest was sent off, Ulric was almost forgotten, and it vexed him very much that Elisi had scarcely time to say good-bye to him, while he held the horse which was to take them as far as Berne, under Joggeli's guidance.

When they were gone, a great calm ensued, which was very pleasant to those who were left behind. Ulric could talk to Freneli without fearing that Elisi would rush out, like a fury, from some remote corner; and although Freneli was distant with him, she did not avoid him, nor break off their conversations so shortly: only once, when Ulric asked her why she had grown paler and thinner lately, she turned away without answering him. It was a pleasure to see how she managed the house, things went like clockwork, and Freneli might have had wings, she did all so quickly and noiselessly. She had an eye to others, while her own hands were occupied, and she did not think it necessary to have a dirty apron and untidy hair to show how busy she was. She was one of those persons, who, whatever they are doing, are always charmingly neat and clean, while others, on the contrary, never look tidy in spite of all their efforts.* When she got up in the morning, she had the whole day's work clearly in her head, so that no time was lost in questions and consultations; she had never to say:

I did not think, I did not remember! it is so tiresome to bear everything in mind.

Ulric in the farm, and Freneli in the house, fitted in the work so wonderfully, that Joggeli, who could not understand the happy combination of goodwill and intelligence, muttered half aloud that there was sorcery in it, and he should be glad when his old woman came back!

Meanwhile, the good mother was at Gurnigel, and Elisi found the place very delightful. The journey had *not* been so delightful; she had put on her sky-blue dress at Berne; at Riggisburg, it occurred to her that black would look more genteel, grand ladies often appeared in black silk dresses. But the coachman absolutely refused to unload the carriage; he swore roundly that he had driven many distinguished parties, and they had never wanted their luggage at Riggisburg. So Elisi had to give up this folly, but she revenged herself by crying and grumbling, until the coachman stopped and begged the ladies to walk up a very steep hill. Elisi refused, and tried to persuade her mother that it was unnecessary. But she was far too sensible a countrywoman to be influenced by Elisi in a point like this: she said she had never in her life driven up such a mountain-side, and it was not the fault of the horses if the driver was a surly fellow, as Elisi called him. She slipped some money into his hand, so that he might not insist on the girl's getting out, and made her way bravely up the hill, panting for breath, and streaming with perspiration.

* Yes, but if they make the efforts, are they not rather to be pitied than reproved? and is it to be expected of *every* girl's head that she should carry the whole day's work clearly in it? In re-reading this story I find the contrast too violent: Freneli is raised above all hope of following her; and Elisi more wickedly foolish than any daughter of such a mother *could* have been.[1]

[1] [Compare Ruskin's letter on this point, given in the Introduction (p. xxxiv.).]

Elisi's arrival in a sky-blue costume caused great amusement at Gurnigel; the ladies laughed, till they showed their wisdom teeth, at her singularly fantastic travelling dress, and some of them approached to watch the unloading of her extensive luggage. Some of the gentlemen twirled their moustaches, or leaned with both hands on their sticks, as they paused, exchanged glances, and made their various remarks in French, Dutch, and German, interspersed with loud bursts of laughter.

By whatever means, Elisi was happy in attracting attention; only two causes somewhat marred her felicity. She did not like being obliged to sit at the burghers' table. If there had been a dressmaker there, she would have at once adopted the costume of a lady, and deserted her mother without any hesitation, in order to place herself at the table of the gentry, at which the peasant costume was not allowed. She often remarked to her mother that she had no appetite amongst those coarse people. In the second place, she thought it very hard to get up so early to drink the waters; she had begun by staying in bed, but the gentlemen had assured her that no time was like the morning for going to Swartzbrunn, so she exerted herself to get up, in order not to waste her opportunities.

All the gentlemen occupied themselves more or less with Elisi; they had made her acquaintance during the first day's dancing, and dancing was her one accomplishment. So they were not unwilling to have her as a partner, and to amuse themselves, during the intervals, at her expense. At first they thought she must be one of those sentimental simpletons, who devote themselves to reading; they spoke to her of Klaur, Kotzebue, and Kramer, of Lafontaine, de la Motte, Fouqué, and others; of Eberhard's Pastelik and Stapfer's Sighs of Love. But they soon found that they were on the wrong tack. Elisi read nothing from one year's end to another; since she had laid down the catechism at school, and the grammar abroad, she had probably never taken a book into her hands, and it was doubtful whether she could have got through a line correctly. She was occupied solely with herself, her clothes, her looks, her food, her marriage, and she had not a single idea beyond these. She did not pretend to enter into literary conversation, or to know the names of these authors; the gentlemen were for a moment at a loss, but they cruised about until at last they discovered how acceptable flattery was to this poor foolish creature. She listened with delight to the most bare-faced and extravagant compliments, so that her mother, who was no simpleton, said to her sometimes:

How can you allow them to go on in this way, my girl? they take you for a fool! If any one had talked such stuff to me when I was young, I should have boxed his ears right soundly!

But the affair assumed rather a different aspect, when it was understood that the sickly-looking Elisi was heiress to at least fifty thousand gulden; they looked at her with other eyes and entertained a sort of respect for her. Fifty thousand gulden! that is no trifle! When the gentlemen were together, they still made game of the girl. But when each was alone, he would reflect on the fifty thousand gulden, place himself before the looking-glass, twirl his moustache, and conclude that though he was still a fine fellow, yet it might perhaps be time to make a move. Then he would revolve in his mind plans for a campaign against the fifty

thousand gulden. Here at Gurnigel there were too many people, and he would not make himself conspicuous, but later he would take up the matter seriously, in the meantime he would gently prepare the approaches. So they no longer tried to make Elisi as ridiculous as possible, but rather sought to be agreeable and to recommend themselves to her. They talked of the pleasure of making her acquaintance, and of the happiness of continuing it, asked where they might have the honour of meeting her, and if they might be permitted to pay her a visit some day. Elisi swam in a sea of felicity. Here and there one ventured to try his conversational arts with the mother, but her answers were so exceedingly brief, that he had little encouragement to proceed. The old woman is stupid, he would say, a mere clod of earth! But the mother said, How can you listen to such men, Elisi? I have never known any so senseless; they can none of them find anything better to say to me, than do I think the weather will be fine? and have we done our haymaking? Our farm lad would be able to talk of something besides the weather and the hay! These gentry think we country people are so dull, we cannot talk of anything but the weather and the hay, forsooth! But while these gentlemen were comfortably secure in their leisurely advances, another appeared who adopted a different plan.

There was at Gurnigel that year a grand-looking cotton merchant; though he had no moustache, he had no lack of gold chains, and his earrings jingled like horse-bells. He was a nimble dancer, and a glib talker. He knew how to address himself to mother and daughter, so as to please both. He entertained the mother with dissertations on the various fabrics of cotton and thread, showing how she could distinguish good from bad, so that she listened to him open-mouthed, and thought to herself how convenient it would be to have such a man beside her when she was making purchases. Then he spoke incidentally of his own affairs, of his large warehouses, of how many thousands he had paid in this or that transaction, so that the good mother was quite impressed. She could not understand how he could get so much money together at once, and thought he must be immensely rich. We also are rich, said she to herself, but we should want time before we could get together such immense sums, and we should be ashamed to borrow even if people were willing to lend. The cotton merchant talked to Elisi of her dress, praised the materials and the colours, but he knew where still better could be procured, and offered to write for the quantity she desired. No counsellor's lady at Berne wore anything to compare to it, and if any one offered him a hundred louis d'or for the material, he should laugh and say what were a hundred louis d'or to him! Mademoiselle Elisi should be the only one in the canton who appeared in this fabric, and he would like to see the eyes which the Berne young ladies would make, when they saw something so distinguished, which they had no means of procuring!

Then he talked also to Elisi about the French canton which she had visited, knew intimately all the places she had been to, could talk of her acquaintances there as if he had just left them, so that Elisi wondered very much that she had never seen nor met him. However, she felt at home with the cotton merchant, and he possessed her full confidence, though the moustaches pleased her better; she had never seen so many

fine gentlemen in her life, Elisi said. They were as straight and upright as if each had just swallowed a walking stick.

But the cotton merchant had his wits about him; he perceived this leaning of Elisi, and knew well that when a favourable speculation falls in your way, you cannot afford time for hesitation. As the weather was again beautiful, he invited the mother and daughter to make an excursion with him to Blumenstein, a second watering-place in the neighbourhood of Gurnigel. The daughter accepted with eagerness, but the mother made objections: she would like to go very well, but it would cost a great deal —the carriage alone would be very expensive: she would not say no, if she could whistle for one of their six horses at the Steinbrucke. But the cotton merchant begged her not to trouble herself about such a trifle, it would be his affair, she must not say anything more. He would spend a far larger sum with the greatest pleasure. The mother at last consented to go, but on the express condition of paying her share: the cotton merchant smiled, and said things could easily be arranged if only the ladies would come, and he begged them to be quite ready to set out at eight o'clock in the morning. He assured them also that the Blumenstein people knew how to cook, whereas at Gurnigel, if they threw something into a saucepan, poured water on it, made a fire underneath and left it, till the dinner bell rang, they concluded that the guests must fare exceedingly well!

The weather was beautiful. It was Sunday: the rather gloomy scene was made cheerful by sunshine, and its monotony was broken by the number of carriages and pedestrians, hastening to Gurnigel and elsewhere. Our travellers, looking very smart, got into a light carriage, and the handsome horse went through the valley like the wind. The mother's best adornment was the broad, white habit-shirt on her ample breast. The daughter, on the contrary, had a starched chemisette, which stuck up to her chin like a letter-case; but had she not a black silk dress, and ornaments of gold and silver?

The gentleman beamed with satisfaction; his clothes were brilliantly new, he wore yellow gloves, and his boots, stockings, and handkerchief left nothing further to be desired. *He drove like a man who had never had a horse of his own.* The mother was always on the point of holding herself on, and she had an anxious face whenever they passed another vehicle. She said they had never gone at that rate, though they had good horses in their stable—she did not like to overdrive an animal. Besides, if a wheel came off, there was no knowing how far they would go down the slope. He had no judgment, but urged the horse uphill also; she said she should not like to trust one of theirs to him.

A horse, she added, is certainly not a human being, but just on that account, because he has not reason, men should exercise it for him, and not urge him beyond his strength.

The cotton merchant laughed very much at this old-fashioned consideration for the horse, and proceeded to relate various exploits which showed his own great skill as a driver and manager of horses. He spoke largely of his father's stables, his English and Mechlenburg horses,—thinking to himself, "They do not know that my father went about the country on foot, carrying a pack of calico on his back!"

They were at Blumenstein in a twinkling, and the many guests, assembled in the arbours, watched the arrival of the visitors.

The cotton merchant played his part well: he gave his orders right and left, to the astonishment of the mother, who thought to herself: Well! to be sure! one sees at once that he is Somebody when he is at home!*

. . . . . .

It was a beautiful evening when Elisi and her mother returned to the Steinbrucke, and the mother was pleased as every step of the horse brought them nearer. Only for this foolish business, how thankful she would be to arrive! The Gurnigel beds were not like those at home, and if she had not wrapped herself up at night, she would have been frozen to death. She wanted to look at both sides of the road at once, each plot of cabbage and flax, each cherry and apple tree, called for her varied exclamations. See! they are pulling the flax already! or, Look, Elisi! those beans are poor. But Elisi did not take the trouble to look, she was occupied in regretting that her sky-blue costume was shabby, and would only do to wear about home.

I wonder very much, said the mother, if they have watered our cabbages well! Then she questioned the driver about the grass and the corn and the hemp, and exclaimed, See, see, there is our church tower! we shall be at home in a quarter of an hour. Her heart bounded when she saw the first familiar face, and she said: If I had known that we should meet *him* first, I should have bought a present for him also: if I am away again for so long a time, which, please God, shall never happen again, I will buy something to give the first person I know, who meets us on our drive home.†

But when they turned into their own estate, the mother's remarks were made with redoubled interest and eagerness; and *she was so absorbed by noticing the sparrows busy amongst the pease,* that she scarcely noticed they were driving up to the house. Then Freneli came running out of the kitchen, Ulric from the granary, and Joggeli stood under the projecting roof, leaning on his stick. He *saw his old wife's arrival with much pleasure,* but of course he did not gratify her by saying so. She tried to lift out a bag, but it stuck fast, and Ulric had to get it, while she greeted him and said, Do not forget to set a scarecrow by the pease to-morrow, or the sparrows will make fine work with them. Then she gave her hand to Freneli, and said kindly: Has all gone well? and have you taken good care of everything? Then, after she had smoothed her crumpled apron, she stretched out her hand towards Joggeli, and said,

* I omit Gotthelf's bitter caricature of the cotton-merchant's courtship, and easy success. The story was written when first the manufacturing interest was becoming powerful in the northern cantons, and the author used his utmost power against it; but of course in vain. For all the enduring value of the book, enough has already been told of Elisi's folly; and it is time for us to learn why we have had to bear with it so long.

† Perhaps the reader perceives for the first time that Joggeli *has* a heart, though a cross-set one, and has been able to make the old wife feel that there is no place like home.

God bless you! How have you been? I am so glad to be at home again. No one will get me away any more.

Ulric had helped Elisi out, and she had bid him good-evening, adding that he must be careful with the parcels and bring them in at once; the things must be unpacked, or they would get creased. Coffee was ready indoors, and the mother could not praise it enough. Even if they had tolerable coffee elsewhere, they had not cream like theirs, which made all the difference. She would often have been glad to exchange all the grand dishes at Gurnigel for a cup of good coffee at the Steinbrucke. She praised the bread also and the cheese, and declared that there was no place like home. She had much to say of what she had seen, but the prevailing theme was her gladness in being back again at the Steinbrucke.

CHAPTER XXIV

DOMESTIC WAR

"The soul's armour is never well set to the heart unless a woman's hand has braced it; and it is only when she braces it loosely that the honour of manhood fails."—*Sesame and Lilies*, § 65.

When Elisi returned, Ulric felt as when a cloud passes suddenly over the sun, or when, in the middle of a confidential conversation, a person enters who brings a sense of restraint. And yet he considered that his good fortune was centred in Elisi, he was glad she had returned, and he wondered how long he should have to wait for the fulfilment of her promises. He was surprised that she did not seek him at the fountain, or in the stable, but he was not vexed; he thought it was one of her whims, and had no doubt that things would settle down as before. His night's rest was not disturbed by any anxieties.

But elsewhere sleep was not so readily found.

The mother had talked all the evening, and given Joggeli an account of all the incidents of her Gurnigel visit except one, and mentioned many names of persons whom she had met, without once naming the cotton merchant. It was long since Joggeli had been so sympathising and interested, so she reproached herself for keeping anything back; he must know all without delay. Listen, she added, as she lay down in her own comfortable bed; there is something more to tell you, and I must get it off my mind, or I shall not be able to sleep for thinking of it.

What can it be? Have you spent all the money you took with you?

Almost, she said, but if that were all, I should not mind; it is something quite different; I scarcely dare tell you. At last she made a great effort: It is this: Elisi has a suitor; he will come the day after to-morrow to ask you for her; all is already settled between them.

I will not have it, exclaimed Joggeli, so nothing can come of it! What a terrible upset John would make! And what would Ulric say? He would run away, and how could I manage the farm without him? I should never get such another servant. It is for Elisi's sake that he stays on, and does not ask for higher wages. I have seen that for a long time.

Would you like him then for son-in-law? asked the mother.

Certainly not; *but as long as he has an eye to Elisi,* he will remain, and all will go well. *I may die in the meantime.* Why should I trouble myself about what will happen after I am gone? Besides, I think Elisi is too proud to take Ulric if no one opposes her. And what has such a cat to do with marrying at all?

But so it is, said the mother; this sort of girl is the most bent on it,

and there is no knowing what she may do. She has now a gentleman suitor, she will never have such a chance again, and it is too good to be lost.

A gentleman, indeed! said Joggeli. He must be a rare villain, and a needy one. A real gentleman would not court such an idiot; he must be hard up, and have no other resource.

Oh! nonsense! said the mother; nothing of the kind! And she displayed her proofs of the riches of the future son-in-law, his large business, his excellent establishment.

Plenty of lies are soon told, said Joggeli. If he is rich, he must be a fool himself to want such a simpleton; he would choose a prettier girl, and not select one who sets food on the table as if it had been clawed together by a cat!

Oh! you are quite mistaken, said the mother; he was the cleverest man at Gurnigel; he knows where cotton comes from, and understands all fabrics; he can tell the difference between the Langthal ell and that of Berne. He explained many things which no one ever made clear to me before. And he told me so much about weaving, that he made me open my eyes. I shall look after our weavers now, I can tell them! He is quite a different sort of man to those sticks from Berne, the officers who twirl their moustaches and lean on their sticks, saying, I think the sun will shine to-day even yet.

Let him be what he will, said Joggeli, he is a gentleman, and I will not give Elisi to a gentleman. If he were a farmer's son, it might be different, he could come to us, I need not give him anything, and Ulric might go where he would. But I do not want a gentleman on my estate. I would rather go and beg my bread. He would want a considerable dowry, too. I know well how gentlefolks chaffer about a daughter's portion, just as butchers do about the price of calves; if they once get hold of a farmer, they think the more they ask, the more he will appreciate the honour of being connected with them.

He talked of the frequent help he was obliged to give his son, and declared that his capital would soon dwindle to nothing if he had to give a marriage portion handsome enough to satisfy another gentleman. Then the farm would not be sufficient to keep them, and they would have to go elsewhere. When people are old they do not like change, and poverty for their declining days. You might have been clever enough to think of that, he added, but a woman always loses her head when there is any talk about a wedding.

You are always so unreasoning, said the mother. I could not prevent this affair; they made it up between themselves before they said anything to me; and if it does not please you, have it out with Elisi, and see what can be done.

It is very fine, replied Joggeli, to get into a difficulty, and then leave it to other people. I declare to you that I will not meddle with this affair, and I have nothing more to say about it. You may get out of it how you can.

The mother repeated to him that it had not been her doing; he was Elisi's father; he had only to break off the engagement if he objected to it, and not to urge *her* into action, while he retired into the background.

This time she would do nothing whatever, and she wished him good-night,—a wish which was not fulfilled for either of them.

Not far off another conversation was going on. Elisi had a nice bedroom of her own, but she generally shared that of Freneli. As soon as they were alone together, she began: Oh! if you only knew something, but I will not tell you. There is no occasion for you to know everything.

Freneli thought she referred to some new costume or bodice, and did not trouble herself much with guessing. But Elisi gave her no peace, so at last she became impatient and said she had better be silent or say what it was.

What shall you say if some one comes in a fine carriage and asks to marry me?

What shall *I* say? said Freneli. Ask Ulric what *he* has to say about it.

I need not ask him; he has not to dictate to me. You may have him yourself as far as I am concerned. You will have been finely taken up with him during my absence. But it is all alike to me. What is a servant-man to me? Try now to get him. You have wanted him for a long time. I am provided with another.

For shame of yourself, said Freneli, to talk so! When have I ever made advances to any men, servants or others? I defy you to say that I have. Though I am not a rich daughter, I should be ashamed to do so. No one has a right to say insulting things to me, and least of all *you!* Keep what you have got. I want nothing with your Ulric, nor any other.

My Ulric! I have no Ulric. What is our servant-man to me? Have you not heard that I have a rich and handsome suitor at Gurnigel? I am engaged to him, and he is coming in a day or two. How you will open your eyes!

Don't talk such nonsense, said Freneli. You cannot take me in! Don't I know that you are engaged to Ulric?

Hush with your stupid Ulric! Don't you understand that I will not have him? I never thought seriously of him. Ah no! Such a rich man! such a handsome man! I shall live in town, and be dressed quite differently. I will give you all the clothes which I shall not be able to wear.

Do stop with your chatter, said Freneli. I pay no attention to it.

You will soon make me angry, said Elisi. Ask my mother if it is not true.

And Ulric? asked Freneli.

What is Ulric to me? I have told you already. It would be hard if one could not look at any one without being obliged to marry him.

But you have not only looked at him; you have promised to marry him, answered Freneli.

Why was he fool enough to believe me? Is it my fault? Men often jilt girls, and it is as well that they should occasionally have their turn and be left in the lurch themselves.

You are utterly worthless! said Freneli. Then she drew the bedclothes over her ears, and replied no more to Elisi's talk.

On the following morning there was a truce. Neither of the contending parties meddled with the other. The mother went round amongst

the servants, giving them presents, and telling them not to show them to the rest, as they might be jealous; but in the course of an hour, every one knew what the others had received, and many cross looks and sharp words were exchanged, so impossible is it, with the best intentions, to please everybody.

Elisi unpacked, and talked a great deal with the maids, who had to help her at every turn. After she had shown the treasures which she had brought home, she gave them to understand that she had made a far grander acquisition at Gurnigel, and in a few hours, the whole household knew that Elisi had a rich and distinguished suitor, and that she would have nothing more to say to Ulric.

As to the unconscious Ulric himself, he went through his ordinary work without the least suspicion, and proceeded quietly after dinner to the forge for the shoeing of the horses. When he returned in the evening, he was aware of strange looks and mysterious whispers; he met eyes full of pity or of derision; he thought the mother and Freneli had never been so kind to him, but Elisi avoided, and seemed not to see him. He was much puzzled, and did not receive the mortifying explanation until he questioned the boy who shared his room at night. The boy hesitated some time before telling him that Elisi was to marry a terribly rich, handsome gentleman, that he was coming the next day, and she wished to have nothing more to say to Ulric. He asked how he knew; and the boy replied that Elisi had boasted of it to the maids, who had repeated it all over the house. There must be something in it, for the master had looked very cross, and not spoken a word to the mistress all day; also they had heard their voices late into the night.

This was a great blow to Ulric, and he could scarcely believe it. He thought Elisi could not possibly be so bad. Had she not given her word and promise, and had not the advances been on her side? Then he remembered her hesitation and delays and her present behaviour. Still he thought she could not treat him so abominably. Was this to be the reward of his honesty and industry? He had saved many thousand gulden for the master, and he had for thanks nothing but mockery and scorn. Every one knew of the affair; he should be a laughing-stock, and not dare to show his face. What would become of him? All his fine dreams fell to pieces during that long night. They venture to trifle with me, he thought, because I am only a servant. It is as if a curse lay on the word, and it is vain to try to escape from it. My master might well preach! he wanted a good servant; that was all. What have I got by being one? Contempt and disappointment. And yet it might not be true. The whole story might be empty talk and a trick of the girls. He would have a clear understanding the next day; if he could not see Elisi, he would go straight to the mistress, and if her reply were not satisfactory, he would not remain an hour longer at the Steinbrucke.

It was some time before he had the desired opportunity. At last he saw Elisi in the garden, dressed up very much, and selecting the prettiest flowers. He did not hesitate, but stood beside her before she was aware of his approach.

Why do you always avoid me? he asked. What is the meaning of it?

Oh, nothing, said Elisi.

But why do you behave to me in that way? why have you no kind word for me? asked Ulric.

Have I not a right to behave as I choose? If I choose it, it is nothing to you!

So that is what it means, said Ulric. Then it is true that you have another suitor?

And if I have, what is it to you? I do not concern myself because you have been courting Freneli.

As to that, there has been nothing which every one may not know. But I must say that you are a bad wench to take another when you were engaged to me!

My goodness gracious! Now the good-for-nothing fellow calls me wench, howled Elisi. Will you let me alone, you servant-man, you? or I will call my father and mother.

Call whoever you please, said Ulric. You are the most contemptible creature on the face of the earth if what people say is true. But it is not true, Elisi, is it?

Why should it not be true? If I can have a rich man in a better position, why should I take you? That would be silly. But do not be angry. I will put in a good word for you, and he will take you into his business, and then you can make your fortune without work.

While Elisi spoke, a handsome chaise, with a well-dressed gentleman inside, drove in front of the house. When she saw him, she cried, There he is! there he is! and ran to meet him. The mother stood at the door, and rubbed her hands on her apron with some embarrassment. Joggeli was nowhere to be seen, and Ulric stood in the garden, like Lot's wife when her limbs stiffened at the sight of the burning city. He scarcely knew what he was doing, still less what he should do. He had seen almost unconsciously that Elisi had received the visitor and led him into the best parlour. Then he clenched his fist and said, I will certainly let him know what sort of a creature he has got. Then I will go. I will not stay an hour longer.

As he was about to spring with one bound from the garden to the terrace, he was held fast by his shirt-sleeve. Turning round angrily to free himself from this unexpected check, he saw Freneli standing near him, not frightened, but holding him fast. He did not pull, now; but said impatiently, Let me go.

No, I will not let you go, said Freneli. You may be vexed, but you shall not go. I am sorry for you, Ulric. Elisi has treated you shamefully, but show now that you can control yourself. Stay on, as if you were quite indifferent and unconcerned; that will vex Elisi the most. If you are violent, she will mock at you; and I should not like that, if I were in your place.

For a long time Ulric could not see this, and complained bitterly of Elisi's treatment.

Be glad of it, said Freneli. I have not liked to speak until now, but you may thank God upon your knees for the escape you have had. If you knew Elisi as I do, you would not take her if the whole world belonged to her.

That may be as it will, said Ulric. I will leave immediately. The new son-in-law may work the farm.

That would be the worst thing you could do. You would set everybody talking and laughing about the affair. Some would say you had been sent off, others that you had been made a fool of; you fancied you were going to be farmer of the Steinbrucke, forsooth! Go on as if you were exactly suited, and people will not know what to make of it. They will not only let you alone, but say, It is plain now that Ulric was not so silly as he seemed; he has befooled *them*, and not they *him*.

You have a wise tongue, said Ulric, but I will be hanged if I stay here as servant any longer than——

"Than you have agreed for," added Freneli. "You can go at Christmas. Perhaps I shall go also. But do not go now; do not grieve the mother, and me.* What would Elisi care if you left? On the contrary, it would be just what she would like: the whole burden would fall on my cousin and me, and the master would do nothing but grumble. How can either of us help what has happened? But you would surely have been miserable; and this gentleman will be so, you may depend upon it, though perhaps they deceive each other. Now go into the stable and feed his horse, as if you were quite satisfied. I am certain this is your wisest course. People get through the world better if they do not always show what they feel."

You may be right, said Ulric, a little cooled by this long conversation, but if a man could not give way to his anger sometimes, he would burst. It is quite right to show what one thinks of such conduct.

"You can do that best by staying here, and far more effectually than by an immediate outbreak of indignation. Necessity has taught me that bursts of passion do not accord with the wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove. Go now to your work. *I*—must cook and roast for the gentleman, and I shall do it with the greatest pleasure."

Thus far Gotthelf. What I want the reader to note on this sentence of Freneli's,—the first in which her entire character is told,—may perhaps be read with more patience if I give it in the print of the text.[1]

I have already said (p. 479) that the character of Freneli is too complete to be exemplary,—or even, in the common world, credible; for Gotthelf has joined in it the three perfections of womanly grace, of womanly honour, and of

* See terminal note on this sentence of Freneli's; the rest is clear enough as she speaks it; the piece needing care is just the little bit "Do not grieve the mother, and *me*." But I have given the whole inverted commas for once.

[1] [In this edition, the "text" has been printed in smaller type.]

pure intellect; nevertheless, women of her type, and even coming near her standard, are frequent in the Bernese, Uri, and Tyrolese Alps; and in dedicating the pansy of the Wengern Alp to her,* I meant to indicate at once the relation of her noble strength to her mountain land, and the peculiar sadness and patience in sorrow which invest her, even through the happiest scenes of her life, with the purple robe of the kings and queens who reign at once in earth and heaven.

But the two points of character in which she is eminent above even these gracious women, such as they are generally, are her frankness,—and yet command of her lips. Many very noble women are subtle, reserved, or inexplicable even to themselves; they know not their own hearts, or the tendency of their own thoughts. But Freneli knows, always, not her own mind merely, but her power, capacity, sensibility; knows how truly she can love, how unweariedly she can labour, how faithfully she can keep the Law, and receive the Gospel, of Christ.

And farther, she is frank and simple to the uttermost, even to those who are seeking her destruction. She never deigns to deceive, never loses in anger the peace, or in jealousy the sweetness, of her life and conduct. She expresses neither indignation nor pride to the lover who has left her, asks for no atonement on his return, speaks of her own affection to him as quietly as if it were a sister's, and trusts to his respect for it to guard him against imprudent contest with his own fortune. "Do nothing," she says, "that would grieve the mother, and *me*."

It must always remain a question how far the women who have this perfect power alike over the gift of their affections, and the expression of their feelings, differ in the elements of their nature from those whose passions conquer

* *Proserpina*, vol. ii. p. 33. Compare *Fors*, vol. viii. p. 248.[1]

[1] [The references are to the original editions. See now Vol. XXV. p. 409, and Vol. XXIX. p. 491 (also *ibid.*, p. 441).]

them. Scott, Gotthelf, and Miss Edgeworth, alike assume that noble training and right principle can always give the power of self-command. But in the sequel of this very story it will be seen that Freneli comes of a rugged stock, and has innate strength far above that of ordinary women. Shakespeare allows passion always to conquer in the most lovely natures; but it is of little use for lessoning in daily life to study the thoughts or ways of maidens who are always dukes' daughters at the least! Indeed, in returning to my Shakespeare after such final reading of the realities of life as may have been permitted me (dazzled too easily, and too often blind) it grieves me to find, in him, no laborious nor lowly ideal; but that his perfect shepherdess is a disguised princess; his Miracle of the White Island exultingly quits her spirit-guarded sands to be Queen of Naples; and his cottager Rosalind is extremely glad to get her face unbrowned again.[1] His law for all these high ladies, however, is that they are conquered by love in an instant;* and confess that they are so as soon as they have the chance: while even with Scott and Miss Edgeworth, reserved as the affection may be, it is always deeper than their lover's, and usually anticipates it.

Perhaps the question had better be no farther pressed, till we have seen how Freneli carries herself to the—not bitter—end.

* The British public never can get into its head that Shakespeare's Miranda is not—theirs; or that chess-playing for love or perhaps for death is a different kind of game from Mr. Morphy's, or even Captain Cochrane's. Has my good old friend Mr. Bird any record of a true-love game?[2]

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[1] [For other references to the characters of Perdita, Miranda, and Rosalind, see Vol. XIV. p. 243 *n.*; and Vol. XXV. pp. 418, 419.]

[2] [For Ruskin's interest in chess, see in a later volume various letters to Mr. Bird (author of *Chess Masterpieces*, etc.) and others. Games by Morphy and Cochrane are given in Bird's book.]

CHAPTER XXV

THE BETROTHAL IS FOLLOWED BY DISQUIETUDE INSTEAD OF PEACE

"Life is . . . become difficult to the honest."—*Crown of Wild Olive*, § 143.

When the suitor was gone, and the old couple were left to their own reflections, they felt anxious and heavy-hearted. What will Ulric say? What will John say? How will it all turn out? These questions disturbed them. They were rudely shaken out of the quietness of their ordinary life. To their great astonishment, Ulric said nothing, and acted with as much indifference as if he was quite unconcerned. When his fellow-servants tried to draw him out, he smiled in a peculiar manner, so that they were entirely at a loss. This tranquillity, which he at first assumed, soon became real; he felt as if he had been awakened from a most oppressive dream. He had been dazzled by the thought of the money and the estate; he had been blind to Elisi's personality. Now he could breathe freely, and see clearly; he was approaching the standpoint from which he must thank God for his escape. He realised more and more the misery of such a marriage; he began to understand his old master, and many a time he wished he could ask him to forgive his mistrust of his truly kind and wise advice. At the same time, he was quite determined to give up his place; he only waited for an opportunity to say that he should not remain. The situation would not be desirable with such a rascal as the son-in-law, and that the cotton merchant was a rascal, his own conscience told him all the more plainly as he became fully aware why he himself had wanted the girl. He was convinced that if the gentleman had had the twentieth part of the means he pretended, he would never have thought of marrying Elisi.

John and his wife did not take the matter so coolly. Elisi wished to go and tell them the news and display her watch and chain, but neither of her parents would go with her, and she had not courage to venture alone. So a letter was despatched, and the pair arrived like a bomb-shell, which immediately burst and exploded.

There was no offensive name which John did not give to the bridegroom, no vice which he did not impute to him, no curse which he did not lay upon him; and Trinette, in the midst of her tears and sobs, supplemented John's abuse.

Elisi did not spare her tongue, and her brother would have beaten her if the mother had not interfered.

You have it now, said Joggeli; you see how it is; and I have to help to drink the beer which you have brewed.

John swore with fearful oaths that he would never again set foot in his father's house if he accepted such a scamp as son-in-law. Then he sought Ulric, and used similar language; he declared that if such a creature as Elisi must needs have a husband, he would a hundred thousand times rather have Ulric for his brother-in-law than that rascal, half scamp, half gentleman. And how badly you have been treated; have you not? I wish you would come to me. But you will come yet. You will not stay in this cursed hole.

Ulric answered evasively, and was heartily glad when John drove away in the direction of his inn.

The only result of the poor man's exertions on this day was, that his wife beset and tormented him until he gave her a watch and chain like those of her sister-in-law.

Joggeli's inquiries received unfavourable, evasive, or superficial answers. Some said the cotton merchant was an adventurer, who could not be trusted. He seemed very ready to spend, but not so ready to pay. Others said they knew nothing accurately about him, as they had no personal dealings with him: others that he was a pleasant, clever young man, who was sure to make his way, and they thought he had good means. As the decisive moment approached, the hearts of the parents became heavier and heavier, especially that of the good mother, whom Joggeli held responsible for all their trouble.

We will pass over the details of the wedding which followed, for our business is really with Ulric, and we have been already too long detained with this secondary personage. But when the cotton merchant had once appeared, we could not, on account of his innate pertinacity, get quickly rid of him; and even now, after fixed resolve, we have great difficulty in shaking him off.

Ulric's silent and calm demeanour seemed very strange, though not unpleasing, to the old couple. When the stir of the wedding was over, the mother urged Joggeli to ask him if he would remain, and say that they all wished him to do so. Joggeli said if he did not, it would be her fault; there was a better one to be had: the son-in-law had promised them one; but they were accustomed to Ulric, and it would be quite right for him if he stayed; still he should not hang himself if he went. You are always the same simpleton, said the old woman, and went out of the room.

One day, when Ulric was cutting some grass, Joggeli hobbled up to him, and said he supposed they were going on as usual, and he intended to stay.

No, master, said Ulric; I will leave. You must look out for another.

But what do you want? said Joggeli; more wages again? or has John enticed you away from me?

Neither, said Ulric.

Then why will you leave?

Oh, one cannot always stay in the same place, said Ulric.

And if I give you four thalers on it? asked Joggeli.

I would not stay for a hundred. I have been insulted, and no money shall keep me.

Joggeli went back to the parlour, and said to his wife, You have it now; Ulric will not stay. Go and look for another; I will have nothing

whatever to do with it. When the wife asked, Why? what did he say? Joggeli would tell her nothing; she might ask him herself. And when she said, What shall we do now? he retorted, There, you see! I told you from the beginning how it would be!

She did not question further. She went to the kitchen to the industrious Freneli, who was her confidante in all her domestic affairs, and said, Only think of it! Ulric says he will leave us. Do you know the reason?

Not exactly, said Freneli; but Elisi made him very angry; he will think that he has been insulted, and not wish to work all his life for such a poor return.

But what shall we do now? said the mother; we shall never get such another. He is well-mannered, godly, industrious; everything goes smoothly; one hears no contentions. If he goes, all will be changed. I dare not think of it.

Nor I either, said Freneli. I should not like to be here when all is so different. I am sorry, cousin, but I take this opportunity of telling you that I cannot remain—I also wish to leave.

You also? What have I done to grieve you? You have an understanding with Ulric.

No, cousin, said Freneli; I have no understanding with Ulric; we have nothing to do with each other. And you have done nothing to grieve me, cousin; you have always been a mother to me; when everything has been against me, you have taken my part. I shall never forget it as long as I live; and as long as I can pray, I will beseech the dear Lord to make up to you all that you have done for me.

Freneli cried, and large tears rolled down the mother's red cheeks as she took her hand, and said, But why, you foolish maid, must you go away if you love me, and I have done nothing to grieve you? I am accustomed to you, and you have done everything to please me. If I mentioned a thing, it was done as soon as said. How can I manage the burden of housekeeping when I am getting older every day? and I shall soon be good for nothing.

Cousin, I am sorry, said Freneli, but I must leave. I have vowed that I will not bear Elisi's abuse every time she comes with her husband. She would always accuse me of wishing to attract him, and reproach me with being kept out of charity. I told her I should be out of the way, and be no more continually taunted.

Ah, said the mother, you must not mind Elisi; you know she has always been unmanageable, and it is no matter what she says. Why do you make me suffer for it?

God knows! I cannot say, said Freneli. Why can no one keep Elisi in subjection? I must go out of her way. And there is another thing which I would only say to you: her husband, the impudent scamp, comes about me more than is necessary. I shudder at the thought of his touching me. He had better take care of himself; if he comes too near, I will give him a blow which will send him flying. Ah, cousin, it would not be good for me to live here. I could not do so any longer. The son-in-law behaves as if he had a right to command, and the farm was already his own.

This was, indeed, too true. He had observed the rich abundance which prevailed in the housekeeping—a quart of milk, a pound of butter, a loaf more or less did not signify; there was no lack of ordinary frugality, but no count was kept of the eggs, and much food was given away to the poor. He had many a time reckoned up to Joggeli what he might sell, shown him that the estate only yielded two per cent., and represented that if he turned the produce into money and invested it in his business, it would bring him in at least eight per cent. After these interviews Joggeli grumbled to his wife, and urged her to check this easy and bountiful expenditure. The gentleman was surprised when his father-in-law showed him rich stores in his chests and granaries; he remarked that a considerable capital was locked up in these things, which was bearing no interest, but rather diminishing in value. If he would sell only the superfluity at a favourable moment, he would guarantee that it would bring him in at least two thousand gulden; he must not, of course, sell to the little second-hand country traders, who wanted about fifty per cent. for themselves, but direct to the first purchaser.

In this way he had talked them out of their yarn, their flax and linen, their corn and cherry brandy; and the good mother's heart ached, and her eyes filled with tears, as she looked into the empty chests. I have never been so bare of stores since I began housekeeping. God save us from a season of scarcity! I do not know what we should do; we have nothing beforehand. The son-in-law brought flourishing accounts of successful sale, but no money. He said carelessly that he had given the usual half-year's credit. Joggeli could have dispensed with this adherence to custom.

And the good mother's spirit was overwhelmed. Ulric and Freneli were going to leave. The son-in-law held the reins of command. She had to do the housekeeping upon nothing, to stint the poor, to render an account of each measure of meal, of each batch of cakes. She felt so miserable that she was obliged to sit down and cry, so that even Joggeli went to her and begged her to calm herself; every one would hear her, and know what was the matter; she must not mind what he had said; he had not meant her to take it amiss. Freneli also comforted her, and said she must not grieve; things might go more easily than she feared. But she shook her head, and begged them to leave her; no talking helped her; she must regain her composure by thought and reflection. She went about silently, as if she had a great weight on her heart, sat down occasionally when she thought herself unobserved, rested her hands on her knees, or wiped away some silent tears with the corner of her apron.

After some days she appeared relieved, the shadows seemed to vanish, and she said that her heart felt less sorrowful, but she would like to go away for a little change; she could not feel cheerful, and she should recover better if she could spend a day or two in another place.

Joggeli had nothing to object to this; even *he* had been grieved to see her so sorrowful; she might go either to her son or her daughter, and Ulric had plenty of time to drive her.

She replied that she did not wish to go to either, their disputes and discontent would give her no rest, and if she took sacks of new thalers, they would think they got too little. She preferred going to pay her long-promised visit to her cousin Bodenbauer. She had never been in that

direction, and the sight of new scenes would turn her thoughts from her troubles. Also she should take Freneli with her; she had not been away for a long time. She had kept house at Elisi's wedding, and it was only right that she should have her turn.

Joggeli had a great deal to object to this latter arrangement, but he gave in this time on his wife's account, and made up his mind to bear the inconvenience of Freneli's absence also.

Ulric rejoiced when he heard that he was to drive the mistress to Farmer Boden's. Freneli, on the contrary, resisted for a long time, had a hundred reasons against going, and only yielded when the cousin said, You are very tiresome. To cut the matter short, I tell you, you are to come.

CHAPTER XXVI

OF A SECOND JOURNEY, WHICH ALSO LEADS TO UNEXPECTED EVENTS

"The woman's intellect is for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision."—*Sesame and Lilies*, § 68.

It was a Saturday morning, a beautiful autumn day early in November, when the black horse was harnessed by active hands, and the chaise was brought before the door. Ulric, in Sunday clothes, placed himself on the box with a grand air, whip in hand. Not long after, Freneli came, fresh and beautiful as a spring morning, with a little nosegay in the front of her bodice. She placed her packages inside, and then the mistress appeared, accompanied by Joggeli, and giving him numberless parting directions.

People will think it is a wedding, said Joggeli, when they see you driving about the country on a Saturday. Freneli looks exactly like a bride.

Such folly! said Freneli, and blushed over face and neck.

Ulric must have a nosegay too; then every one will think so, said a pert maid, who snatched off Ulric's hat, and ran with it into the house.

Mädi, give back the hat, said Freneli, angrily. What does Ulric want with a posy? Do not venture to touch a flower.

When Mädi did not choose to hear, Freneli wanted to spring from the carriage, but the mother, shaking with laughter, held her fast and said, Let it be. It is only fun. Perhaps they will take *me* for the bride. Who knows?

The whole household took part in the joke, and laughed at the anger of Freneli, who would not let herself be pacified, while Ulric entered into the sport, and put his hat jauntily on his head. Freneli tried to snatch at it, in order to take out the bunch of flowers, but the mother said she must not be so silly. It really was not such a terrible thing if they were taken for a bridal pair.

But she would not have it, Freneli said. She took out her own nosegay, and would have flung it away if the mother had not said, You must not go on in that violent way! The girls who make such a fuss are those who are the most anxious for a husband.

I certainly am not, said Freneli. I want no simpleton, such as they all are. I do not know what I should do with one.

Oh, like others, most probably, said the mother, laughing heartily as they drove off with the incensed Freneli in the keen morning air.

The withered leaves hung on the trees in all their pomp of colour, and in the ground beneath them the young seeds sprang up green and fresh, and sparkling with the dewdrops which hung on the tips of their slender blades, and the mysterious misty sky stretched broodingly over all.

Black crows flew over the land; green woodpeckers clung to the trees; nimble squirrels ran across the road,* and were the next moment peeping curiously at the passers-by from the security of a lofty branch; the wild geese sailed high in air, in their well-ordered triangle, passing to a warmer land, while their strange departing notes were heard in the far distance.

The mother's sensible eye took cheerful note of everything, and many wise remarks were exchanged between her and Ulric. Especially when they were driving through villages, things crowded on their notice; and there was scarcely a house which did not give occasion to some observation.

It is no good always to stick fast at home, said she; one sees always the same things. One should drive about the country from time to time, not from curiosity merely, but to learn something. People do things differently in different places, and one can choose the best method.

After a time, she told Ulric to stop at the next inn; the horse might want something, and she would be glad of refreshment herself; she was rather cold.

She told Ulric to come in when the horse had had his oats. They were surprised that it was not later by that clock. The hostess dusted the chairs with her apron, brought wine, and apologised for the delay with the tea. The mother sent Freneli with a further invitation to Ulric.

When he was there, and they had drunk to each other's health, the hostess began to talk, and said they had already had another wedding-party there that morning. Then the mother had a hearty laugh, Ulric laughed also, but Freneli became very red and angry, and said, The roads are not for wedding-parties only; other people have also a right to drive on Saturdays!

The hostess said she must not be offended, she did not know them, and she thought how well they suited each other; she had not seen such a handsome couple for a long time.

The mother assured the hostess she need not apologise, they had already had a hearty laugh about it at home, they had thought how it would be, and the girl had been very angry about it.

It is not kind of you, cousin, to help to plague me, said Freneli. I would never have come if I had known.

No one plagues you, said the cousin, laughing. You are so silly! Many a girl would be delighted to be taken for a bride.

But I am not, and if I am not let alone, I will run away home.

You cannot shut people's mouths, and you may be glad if they say nothing bad of you, answered the cousin.

It is bad enough for them to mix up my name with one that I do not want, and who does not want me.

Freneli had for some time been anxious to go; at last the horse was put in, and they drove off again. The mistress often told Ulric not to urge the horse; she would not like him to take any harm. When she heard that they were a league from Erdopfelkof, she gave orders to stop at the next inn; there they would have some dinner. She was hungry, and she would not like to arrive at Cousin John's just at dinner-time;

* All this *was* so, in the sweet, quiet, half-wild, kindly and calmly inhabited Bernese lowlands once.

it would put them about too much. It would be more convenient and pleasant to arrive there in the afternoon; coffee would be soon prepared, and they should enjoy it.

Ulric obeyed, drove up to the inn, and was courteously received by the waiting-maid. She showed them into a room, saying, as she opened the door, Go in,—there are already two parties there. And from inside they heard the words, This is good; here comes another wedding couple. The cousin laughed so that she shook all over. You see, it is to be a wedding, do what you will.

No one shall get me to go in, said Freneli, now downright angry; and if it is to be like this all day, I will go home on foot. And it is not kind of you, Ulric, not to be more sensible, and to take the nosegay out of your hat. Not that it means anything.

Then Ulric said that he did not wish to vex her; he had taken it as a joke; he would gladly give her the nosegay, and if she wished to go home, he would soon drive the black horse there, he was sure.

Freneli took the nosegay, and said, Thank you.

But the cousin said, I would not have given it to her. You need not be ashamed of each other.

Once for all, cousin, be it as it may, I will hear no more about it, and I will not go in to the wedding-parties. If you will not come with me into the public room, I will run home immediately, exclaimed Freneli.

What a girl that is! said the cousin. Really, Ulric, if I were you, I should be vexed with such talk.

He may for me! said Freneli; but I should have thought Ulric was too sensible to enjoy such foolishness.

Only wait, Freneli, said the cousin; you will think differently some day. It is, after all, a fine thing to be a bride.

A fine thing! continued Freneli. I think dying is preferable to marrying. Death is to the blessed the gate of heaven, but marriage may open the door to the greatest misery. You may think that all is bright and hopeful, the air may seem full of music, and, after all, you may be going to disappointment and despair.*

Oh, girl, said the cousin, you talk just like that beggar who said she would not like to be a farmer's wife because the food was too coarse for her, and who was found immediately afterwards in the cellar, trying to steal a whole basketful of it. Beware of such talk; we are responsible for our words, even when we are angry; we never know what will happen; and if we come into the position we have forsworn, these foolish words rise up like ghosts to torment us.

Cousin, said Freneli, I do not wish to vex you, nor you either, Ulric, but let me alone. I am only a poor girl. I must take care of myself, and not let myself down.†

* A wonderful bit of true Freneli.

† Quite heavenly, all this piece from "A fine thing! continued Freneli," to the close of the scene. I don't like italics, but must say a word or two yet of Freneli's "magic" in my general notes on the education of working girls, for which I mark these passages.[1]

[1] [The intended notes were not written.]

My dear child, said the woman, who has the least thought of slighting you? Many a rich daughter would be glad to resemble you; and I would give a great deal if Elisi were like you. You would make a man happy, were he poor or rich. You are fit for any position, and Elisi (God help her!) is good for nothing. I cannot understand how it is. I brought you both up, and you are entirely different. *Whatever you touch goes rightly.* If I were a young man, I should say *you,* and no other. But whatever Elisi takes in hand, she does awkwardly, and my anxieties about her will bring me to my grave.

The good mother's tears came to her eyes. Freneli, *who thought to herself that two girls might be brought up in the same place, by the same person,—and yet differently,* tried to comfort her by the hope that things would turn out better than she thought. But she shook her head, and said she had hoped Elisi would set to work and improve when she was married, but she did not; she sat all day with her hands before her like a fine lady; she was a simpleton, and would remain one all her life long. It would be well for her if she could do the tenth part of what Freneli did. *Freneli turned things out of hand as if by magic. If Elisi had to dust a chair, she would be all day about it, and lie in bed the next day to rest herself.* The beds were often unmade in the afternoon, and at nine o'clock in the evening they did not know what was to be for supper. It put her out of all patience to see it. But say nothing about it at home, she added; I should not like it to be talked of.

Freneli had recovered; the praise had done her good; she did not exactly know why. She chatted, discussed the food, and even joked Ulric, pretending that his glass and his plate were always empty. The mistress also forgot her motherly griefs, and they drove merrily off towards Bodenbauer's.

Ulric had then much to tell as to the owners of the houses and lands. His heart bounded when he saw the first field which belonged to his old master; all the work he had done on it came back to his mind; he pointed it out from a distance, and showed its peculiarities. When they arrived at the house, the household was assembled outside, under the projecting roof, making sauer-kraut. All raised their heads at the unexpected carriage, and at first they did not know them; then they cried, It is Ulric! it is Ulric! and the children sprang forward to meet him.

Then John said, Here is the cousin's wife from the Steinbrucke! I wonder why *she* has come!

He and his wife bid them kindly welcome, and Eisi said, God greet you, Ulric. Do you bring us your wife?

Now you hear! said the cousin, laughing again heartily. It is to be, whether you will or not; every one says the same.

They take us everywhere for a wedding-party, explained Ulric, because we are driving together on a Saturday, when so many newly married couples are on the roads.

Yes; and not only that, said John, but it seems to me you do not suit each other badly.

Listen, Freneli, said the mother; Cousin John thinks so too; there is no use in holding out against it any longer.

Freneli, half laughing and half crying, between amusement and vexation,

controlled herself because of the onlookers, and answered that she had always heard it took two to make a wedding; but in this case neither of them desired it, so she did not see how anything could be made of it.

What is not may be, said John's wife.

Freneli made no reply, but gave her hand again to the farmer and his wife, and apologised for having come; she said the mistress would have it so, and she hoped they would not think that she had made too free.

The housewife said she was very glad to see her, and invited them all to go in; but they preferred remaining outside, it was so fine and pleasant.

The fire was quickly lighted, and coffee prepared, though it was only after repeated assurances that they had dined, and needed nothing substantial, that a more formal meal was dispensed with.

Anna-Bäbeli had grown from a lively child into a beautiful girl; she soon made friends with Freneli, and took her away to show her her treasures. Ulric also presently withdrew, out of respect, so the older people were left alone.

Then the cousin began, with a sigh, to explain why she had come. John had so often served them, that she turned to him now for counsel and help. She related all that had passed at the Steinbrucke since the unhappy visit to Gurnigel, and all her fears for the future, and ended by saying that she only knew one way out of their difficulties, which was, to let the farm, and take Ulric for tenant. He was honest and good; he would regard their interests; and, also, he might make his own fortune: they would not drive a hard bargain with him. She had not mentioned it to a single creature; she had wished to discuss it with him first; and if he approved of the plan, she would get him to talk to Ulric, and set the matter going. If she could accomplish it, she should wish for nothing more in the world, though many things would remain that were not to her mind.

John said there was a great deal that was good in the idea, and he should rejoice in it for Ulric's sake; but there were two objections;—one, that Ulric had too little money for so large an undertaking; his savings were considerable, but still quite insufficient. He would scarcely have enough to buy stock, and he would be obliged to sell at the wrong time, which was the ruin of most tenant-farmers: then, secondly, he could not keep house with servants only, he must have a wife, and where was one to be found who could manage such extensive housekeeping?

I know of one for him, said the cousin—just the very girl we have brought with us. There could not be a better, and she and Ulric are accustomed to each other; we might die to-day, and they could carry on everything, so that no one would remark that we were missing. She is strong and healthy, and very thoughtful for one so young. She is not rich, certainly, but she has nice little savings, a good stock of clothes, and we should not let her go empty-handed. You know about her mother. If Ulric took Freneli, I think he would need little for the stocking of the farm in implements, cattle, etc. The things are there, they might have them at a valuation, and we could take up the farm again if we wished. They might begin almost as if he was the son of the house.

That is all very nice and very good, said John, but you must not take it amiss if I ask whether you think that everybody will give their consent.

Many persons would have to agree about it. What will your people say? Joggeli is sometimes odd, and your children will wish to let the farm at the highest rent. Ulric would make a great venture; a bad year, or disease among the cattle, might ruin him. The worth of five hundred gulden, more or less, is not perceptible on such an estate, but two or three thousand may be lost in a year. And would the girl take Ulric? She seems lively and merry, and he has some thirty years on his shoulders.

The cousin said these points did not trouble her much. Joggeli would, in the end, be glad to give up; and Ulric would certainly be acceptable to him as tenant-farmer. It would be quite right for their son; he had urged them to let the farm before his brother-in-law got hold of everything. He also thought a great deal of Ulric, and would have liked to engage him for himself. The son-in-law did not matter; he had had far too much to say in their affairs, and they should be glad to end his interference. Freneli, she knew, had no one else in her mind. She thought she was not indifferent to Ulric, and that was the reason why she had been so angry when people had taken them for a wedding-party. She remarked that though she was old, she had not forgotten how girls who have self-respect behave in such circumstances. She really could not understand the forward wenches of the present day!

Excuse me, cousin, said John, but if we wish an affair to succeed, we must consider it thoroughly, and be quite open about it. I will say frankly that this proposal pleases me for your sake, and for Ulric's, and also for my own, as Ulric is much in my mind, and I regard him almost as a son. He talked to me about Elisi, and I dissuaded him. I saw that my advice did not suit him, and I wonder if he will say anything to me about it now. Shall I talk to him on this present subject, or will you discuss it first with Joggeli?

I would rather make it straight with Ulric and Freneli first, and that is why I have brought them here, said she. If I had begun with Joggeli, and then they had not consented, he would have reproached me with my bad management all my life long, for in that way he is very odd, and never forgets. But he is not one of the worst. Sound Ulric, Cousin John, and find out how he is disposed. I should feel quite light-hearted if I could see my way. Does not the maid please you? she asked.

John and his wife admired Freneli greatly, and said how pretty and attractive she was. The farmer promised his ready help.

He was not alone with Ulric that evening, so the desired interview could not take place; but the next morning, as soon as they had breakfasted, John invited Ulric to go for a walk with him on his land. The cousin wished to leave in good time, so as not to be late in reaching home; and while the wife was urging her to stay until the next day, the two men set off.

It was a beautiful morning. The bells sounded from one church tower after another, announcing that this was the Lord's Day, and inviting men to keep Sabbath with Him, to receive His peace and to know His love. The two men walked on with devout minds; and for some time few words were exchanged between them. They came to a belt of wood, from which they could see the valley, bathed in the wonderful mist of autumn, and

the many church towers, which each sent forth its summons, calling men together to receive seed into prepared hearts, so that it might bring forth fruit, some sixty, some a hundredfold. They sat there yet a while in silence, and drew in, through eye and ear, the Lord's magnificent teaching, which is given to all, day by day, in every land, without spoken words: they read in the book of nature, and allowed its music to penetrate to the sanctuary of their souls.

At last John asked, Are you not going to stay at the Steinbrucke, then?

No, said Ulric. Not that I am angry about Elisi; I saw afterwards that I should not have had an hour's happiness with such a wicked simpleton. I cannot understand what I was thinking about. But still I should not like to remain; the son-in-law is constantly there, plunders the old people, and tries to rule every one else. I do not like to see it, and I will not be ordered about by him.

But what will you do, then? asked John.

That is just what I should like to consult you about, said Ulric. I could get plenty of places. I might go to the son; he would give me as high wages as I liked. I have no feeling against being a servant, but I think if I am ever to begin anything else, it is about time now. I am over thirty years of age.

Oh yes, said John. Have you any thoughts of marrying?

Not exactly, said Ulric; but if I am to marry at all, it should be soon; and one should set up in some way when opportunity serves. But I do not know how to set up. I have too little money. What are a thousand gulden? I have often thought of what you said to me; people cannot make the rent out of little farms; a tenant-farmer without capital cannot undertake a great estate, and with a small one he goes to the ground.

Oh, said John, a thousand gulden are indeed something; and there are farms here and there where the cattle and implements can be taken at a valuation, which would leave you the thousand gulden in hand, and if you wanted more, you would readily find people who had it.

Yes, but they would not lend it to me. If you want money, you must give good security.

Remember, Ulric, said John, as I have often told you, a good character is good security. Fifteen years ago I would not have lent you fifteen batzen, but now, if you wanted one or two thousand gulden, you should have it on a simple acknowledgment; or I would go security for you. Tell me what you want. What are men in the world for, if not to help one another?

That is a kind offer, said Ulric. I should not have ventured to think of such a thing. If I had a chance now, I would accept it.

I would not, if I were you, said John; I would look out for a wife first, and then I would set up in some way. Many a man has gone to the ground because the wife did not suit herself to his business. To manage a house well, there should be unity of will. You would gain much if you had a wife, and then you could choose a home together which suited you both. But perhaps you have some one in view?

No, said Ulric; I know of one, indeed, but she would not have me.

Why not? asked John. Is it a rich farmer's daughter again?

No, said Ulric; it is the girl who has come with the mistress. She is

not rich, but whoever gets her will be a fortunate man. He would be happier with her if she had not a batz, than with the rich Elisi. Everything prospers with her, whatever she takes in hand goes well, and there is nothing that she does not understand. I believe she is never weary; she is first in the morning and last in the evening, and never idle during the day. She is never late with the meals; she does not worry the maids; she is never sullen nor out of temper; *the more there is to be done, the better-humoured she is,* while most women become dreadfully cross when they are busy; she is a thrifty manager, yet remarkably good to the poor, and if any one is ill, she waits on them with the utmost kindness: there is no one like her, far or near.*

But why should you not get her? asked John; does she dislike you?

No, said Ulric. She is kind to me, and she does everything that can give me pleasure. When I am anxious to get something done, she helps; and she has never put an obstacle in my way, as some women do, out of the mere love of contradiction. But she is rather proud; she cannot forget that she belongs to a superior family, however ungraciously they may regard her. She makes men keep their distance, and she has been known to box their ears.

But that does not prove that she would not take you; it is quite right that she should keep up her maidenly dignity.

But there is another thing, said Ulric. I dare not think of Freneli. Would she not say to me, Now that you cannot get the rich one, I am good enough for you, forsooth! If you could prefer the green and yellow Elisi, I will have nothing to say to you. I do not like any one who could engage himself to such a creature. That is what she would answer me. And yet, during all the time of that wretched affair with Elisi, my mind was filled with Freneli. I see now that I have loved her, and her only. If I had her, I would venture to undertake a farm, and make more of it than any one else. But it is too late. She would not take me; she is too proud.

Oh, said John, you must not lose courage so long as a girl is free. Women are strange beings; they sometimes do the very opposite to what is expected of them. If things are as you say, I should risk it. The girl pleases me.

No, master, I would not ask her for a hundred thalers. I know well that it will almost break my heart to leave her and see her no more each day. But if I were to ask and she were to reject me, I think I should hang myself on the first tree. I could not bear to see another take her to church; I believe I could shoot him. But she will not marry; she will remain single.

Then John began to laugh heartily, and to ask how he knew that such an incomparable girl, aged twenty-three, would always remain single.

Oh, said Ulric, she does not wish to marry; and I do not know one who would be worthy of her.

The farmer then said they must manage to get home before the service was over; he did not care to meet the people coming out of church. Ulric followed, saying little, but always bringing the conversation round to Freneli. Then he begged John not to let a word of what he had said pass his lips.

* Well said, Ulric, at last!

You foolish fellow, said the farmer, to whom should I repeat it?

The cousin had been fidgety for a long time; and as soon as Ulric and his old master came, she told Ulric to go to the room in which she had slept, to ask Freneli to prepare for their departure.

Ulric found the girl standing before a table, on which she was folding one of the cousin's aprons. He went gently behind her, put his arm round her, but quite respectfully, and said, The mistress wishes to go.

Freneli turned round quickly, silent, and astonished at this unusual familiarity.

He said, Are you still vexed with me?

I have never been vexed with you, said Freneli.

Give me a kiss, then; you have never given me one; and he bent down towards her.

In a moment Freneli broke away from him so violently, that he was pushed into the middle of the room; yet he *thought* he had got a kiss first!* But she was very angry. She said he was too old for such tricks, and she supposed the mistress had not sent him up to delay her with such foolery. He should think what Stini, his old sweetheart, would say to it. She would not like to be led such a dance as Ursi was. Then she laughed, so that Ulric was quite crestfallen, and made his way to the door as quickly as possible.

They did not set out as early as the mistress intended; it was absolutely necessary to partake of a repast to which John's wife had devoted her whole cooking powers and the best of her household stores. Although the cousin said repeatedly, Bless me! who could eat of everything? there was no end to the pressing, and she was not allowed to leave the table until she declared that she could not possibly swallow another morsel.

While the horse was being put in, she pressed new coins into the children's hands; they refused at first, and the parents protested, but she said they were to say no more about it, and she hoped they would come to the Steinbrucke, so that she might show them how grateful she was for their hospitality. They replied that it would be very pleasant, but she need not have been in such a hurry; she might as well have stayed another day. She got into the little chaise at last, and at first starting had a great deal to say to Freneli about the observations she had made. She said if she had been younger, and able to work out her ideas, she should have derived great benefit from her visit. Ulric was silent; he appeared to be exclusively occupied with keeping the black horse at a brisk trot.

At last the mistress begged him to spare the poor beast, and gave him orders to stop about half-way, not only on account of the horse, she said, but also on her own; ham, and so many other good things, always made her thirsty.

Freneli said she felt just the same, and to-day they might go to an inn without being taken for a wedding-party (they would rather think, from Ulric's face, that they were returning from a funeral).

Ulric said he had no occasion to look cheerful as far as *she* was concerned. On Saturday it was not right for him to laugh; on Sunday it was not right for him to look serious; it was hard to hit the precise point.

* This is very lovely. It was so light that he was not sure.

You are hasty, Ulric, said Freneli; I did not know one might not venture to make a remark!

Quarrel well! said the mistress; lovers must have quarrels, and you are just like a couple, the day *after* the wedding!

That is why I will not marry, said Freneli. As long as I am single I have a right to look as I please.

I also, said Ulric; and if my face does not suit you, you need not look at it. Only have a little patience, and I shall be out of your way altogether.

Hush! hush! said the mistress; do not finish so badly and get home angry. If we turn joke into earnest, we can never get through the world. And really, if people blaze up in that manner, they *had* better remain single. I also was hasty-tempered when I was a girl; I could bear nothing; but if I had continued so with my Joggeli, one or both of us would soon have been in our graves. I soon saw that one of us must give in, and it would have to be me. Not that Joggeli did not yield a little also; he improved in many ways.

I do not believe there are any two in the world who would not have to alter more or less to suit each other, said Freneli, so it is better to stay single; one is quite free, and no one can take offence.

Oh, Freneli, do you not think of what God requires of you? It is His will that we should be always changing, and becoming better from day to day. Is it beneath you to consider whether you put on a face which is pleasing in His sight?

Cousin, said Freneli, how you come down upon me! We were talking of a husband, and you begin about God. I see little connection between the two! How God can come into your mind when we were speaking of men I cannot understand.* They rather remind one of the devil, for *he* was a man, and tempted the woman, and so brought unhappiness upon us all. I have never heard of a woman-devil, which is a sure sign that the devil has never found his like in women, only in men. The Scripture says there are whole legions of devils amongst men.

Do not talk in that sinful way, said the cousin; you do not know what is in store for you. I believe you do not speak from your heart, but just like all girls who have no lover, or not the right one.

Just as Freneli was going to reply, Ulric, who had turned his back, and behaved as if he did not hear, drove up to the appointed inn. The hostess received them, and ushered them into a private room at the request of the cousin, who desired Ulric to join them presently. Then she (the cousin) ordered refreshments, remarking that "the drive had made her so hungry, she could not have believed it." †

* Monkey that she is!

† I use inverted commas now, to make this lovely scene quite clear.[1] It is worth having read all the book through, in the dullest of it, only for these three pages.[2]

[1] [The remark is explained by a letter from Ruskin to the translator, in which he said: "The inverted commas were all struck out by my orders. I am mindful for several reasons to do without them; yet feel in my own proofs some difficulty in doing so."]

[2] [The three pages were from this point onwards.]

Ulric did not come, though the hostess was sent after him. Freneli did not want to go, and thought, or *said* she thought, "if he were hungry or thirsty, he would come soon enough."

"I shall have to fetch him myself," said the cousin, "if you will not."

Then Freneli went, with a bad grace, to Ulric, who was sulking outside. She said "he might stay where he was, as far as *she* was concerned, but the mistress's orders were that he should come, and it would be no pleasure to her to have to come and tell him again." Ulric went at last, and the mistress reproached him for standing on ceremony. She urged him to eat, pressed him to drink, and talked over everything with him; said how pleased she had been at Cousin John's, and how she saw now where Ulric had got his excellent training. She remarked on her pleasure in the evident attachment of the children to him and the regard of the parents for him. "They think as much of you as if you belonged to them. You will go to them when you leave us?"

"No," said Ulric.

"It is not generally the custom to ask, but will you tell me where you *are* going?" asked the mistress.

Ulric said "he did not know yet; he had not been in a hurry to take a place, though he had had many chances."

"Well, stay with us; that will suit best on both sides; we are accustomed to each other."

"She must not take it amiss," he said, "but he had not thought of remaining any longer in service."

"Have you got anything else to do?" asked she, and when he answered in the negative, she added, "If you do not wish to be servant any longer, what if we were to take you as tenant of our farm?"

These words came like a thunderclap to Ulric. He let his fork, with a piece of mutton on it, fall on his plate, while he kept his mouth open, and turned great round eyes, like plough-wheels, towards the mistress, gazing at her as if she had dropped from the moon.

Freneli, who had been standing at the window, and feeling impatient with Ulric for being so long eating, turned quickly round, and listened intently.

"Yes, look at me," said the mistress to Ulric; "my question is a serious one. If you will not stay as servant, would you like to stay as tenant?"

"Mistress," said Ulric at last, "how could I be your tenant? It is out of my power; that is for some one better furnished with money than I am. You are joking with me!"

"No, Ulric, I am in earnest; it is not out of your power; it could be arranged so that the beginning would cost you nothing. Cattle, implements, and tools are all there."

"But who would be my security? A single bad year on such a farm would ruin me. The undertaking is quite beyond me."

"Oh, Ulric, we are not such unreasonable people. We should not let a tenant who is acceptable to us go to ruin for a single bad year. Only say that you are willing, and it shall be done."

"Yes, mistress, but even so who would do the housekeeping for me? That is an important question."

"Oh, take a wife," said the mistress.

"That is soon said," answered Ulric; "but where could I find one who would be equal to such an undertaking, and who would have me?"

"Don't you know one?" asked the mistress.

Then Ulric's words stuck in his throat, and in his embarrassment he scratched about his plate with his fork. Freneli said quickly she thought it was time they were off, the horse had done his oats long since, and Ulric must surely have had enough; they might joke with each other on some other occasion. The mistress paid no attention to her, but said again, after a while, "Don't you know one? I know of one for you." Ulric again turned great eyes towards the mistress. She leaned her broad back comfortably in her chair, and laid one hand on the table, saying in undisturbed and mischievous good-humour, "I will give you one guess. You know her well." Ulric looked round at the walls, but could not find the right words; he felt as if he had a whole sackful of mashed potatoes sticking in his throat. Freneli tripped impatiently behind the mistress, and said they should be setting off; it would soon be dark. The mistress did not listen to her, but continued, "Does she not come into your mind? You know her well; she is an industrious girl, only rather tiresome sometimes; if you did not quarrel, you would suit each other exactly." Then she laughed heartily, and looked from one to the other. Before Ulric could get a word out of answer, Freneli interposed and said sternly, "Go and put the horse in. Cousin, a joke may be carried too far. I wish I had never come. I do not know why I cannot be let alone. People made me angry yesterday, and you are far worse to-day. It is not right of you, cousin."

Ulric stood up, and was going, but the mistress said, "Sit down and listen. I am quite in earnest. I have said to Joggeli many a time, No two people ever suited each other better than those two; they are made for each other."

"But, cousin," said Freneli, "for goodness' sake leave off, or I shall run away. I do not let myself be offered like a cow at a market. Only wait till Christmas, and I shall be out of your sight; or I can go sooner. Why do you give yourself so much useless trouble in bringing two people together who do not care for each other? Ulric wants me as little as I want him, and the sooner we are parted, the better pleased I shall be."

At last Ulric found words. "Freneli, do not be angry with me," he said. "I have had nothing to do with this. But one thing I must say to you, even if you hate me. I have loved you long, and *known* that if you would be my wife, I should be happy indeed."

"Oh, certainly," said Freneli, "as soon as you hear about the farm, you think I should do to keep house for you. You are amusing. If you could only become tenant of the farm, you would marry the first girl you met on the road. But it is otherwise with me. I am not in want of a husband, least of all of one who thinks a wife a secondary consideration, to be thrown in with the farm. If you will not drive, I will run home." And with these words she tried to quit the room.

But Ulric held her fast, and said, "No, indeed, Freneli. You do me injustice. If I had you, I would go with you into waste lands, where I should have nothing to do but clearing and stubbing. It is true that when Elisi encouraged me, and I had the farm in my head, I would have taken her for her money. But I should have sinned grievously, for I loved you

all the time. I used to shrink at her approach, while my heart bounded whenever I met you. Only ask Farmer Boden! I said to him this morning that no woman under the sun could be compared to you."

"Let me go," said Freneli, who, in spite of this fine speech, had pulled and scratched like a cat in a string.

"I will let you go," said Ulric, who had borne the scratching and pinching manfully, "but you must not suspect me of wanting you just for the farm. You must believe that I loved you long before."

"I promise nothing," said Freneli, tearing herself away with an impetus which sent her against the table.

"I have never in all my life seen such a girl," said the cousin. "Be reasonable now. Sit down beside me. *Will* you come or not? I will never speak a kind word to you again if you do not sit down for a minute and keep yourself still. Ulric, order another bottle."

Then she told them what it would be to her if they both went away; she wept at the thought of the evil days which awaited her. She shed bitter tears about her children, but said she might yet be happy if this plan, which she had contemplated during many sleepless nights, could be accomplished. She had never seen two persons who worked together so well and so helpfully. If they were to set up on the farm, they would be sure to succeed. She would do what she could to help them. She and Joggeli would not be like some of the gentry, who are never pleased unless their tenants go to the ground every two years, and who, when they cannot sleep at night, resolve to raise the rent, because it is paid at the right time, and they are afraid it is too low. They would act towards them as if they were their own children, and Freneli should have a portion which a farmer's daughter would not be ashamed of. If Freneli would not be reasonable, she did not know what to do; she would rather not go home any more. She thought she had deserved something from her, she had acted, as she believed, for her good, and Freneli knew that such wild ways vexed her extremely; but she had for a long time been changed towards her: she was not as she used to be. And the good woman burst into tears.

But, cousin, said Freneli, how can you talk like that?* You have been a mother to me, and as such I have always regarded you, and I would not hesitate to go through fire and water for your sake. But I cannot let myself be offered in this way to one who only wants me, with the cows, for his farm.

How can you persist so? said the cousin. Have you not heard him say that he has long loved you?

Oh yes, said Freneli. They all say that. If they had to choke for that falsehood, very few would live to be married. If you had not spoken of the farm, you would have seen how much he loved me. And it was not right of you to say nothing to me beforehand, and then throw me to him as you would throw a fir cone to a pig. If you had allowed me a word with you first, I could have told you what is the main thing with Ulric. He says, Gold, I love you; and then is one to understand, Girl, I love you?

* I leave off the commas now. All is clear as soon as Freneli speaks.

You are a strange creature, said the cousin, and more arrogant than if you were a great gentleman's daughter.

Just because I am only a poor girl, I must keep up my own dignity. I have more need to do it than a proud gentleman's daughter.

But, Freneli, said Ulric, is it fair to make me suffer for it? You know well in your heart that I love you, and that I knew as little as you did what the mistress had in her mind; so it is not right to cast your anger on me.

Oh, said Freneli, now I begin to see that it was all arranged, or you would not defend yourself before you were accused. I will hear nothing more of the matter. I will not be made to jump like a fish into a net.

With these words Freneli tried to get away again, but the cousin held her fast, and said she was the most unreasonable and mistrustful girl under the sun. What had been arranged behind her back? It was true she had gone to Cousin John to consult him about this matter, and that was why she had taken them both with her. But no one had known what was in her mind, not even Joggeli, still less Ulric. She had commissioned John to sound Ulric, and he had praised Freneli up to the skies, but said he dared not speak; he was afraid she would bring up to him his affair with Elisi. Then she thought, if Ulric would not venture, she would speak for him. Nothing would persuade her that he was not acceptable to the girl; she knew how to use her own eyes. Ulric had nothing to do with this either.

Then why did he come to-day into the room where I was packing up, and want to give me a kiss? He never did so before.

Oh, said Ulric, I will tell you right out. You were in my thoughts more than ever after my talk with the master, and I felt as if I would give all I had to know if you loved me. I knew nothing about the farm. When I found myself alone with you, it overcame me, I did not know how. I felt as if I must put my arm round you and ask you for a kiss. At first I believed your eyes did not reproach me, but afterwards I thought you would not have repulsed me so violently if you had loved me. That made me troubled in heart, and I wished that Christmas had come, and I could go, and never be heard of more. And so I feel now, Freneli. If you will not have me, I will have nothing to say to the farm. I will go far away, and no one shall know where I am.

He had stood up and approached Freneli. He was deeply moved, and he looked at her with tears in his honest eyes. Large drops rolled down the cheeks of the cousin.

Then Freneli turned to him with moistened eyes, and a milder defiance played about her mouth; repressed affection shone in her eyes; but her lip curled, and she said, But, Ulric, what will Stini say? Will she not sing—

His heart is like a pigeon-cot;
One flies in, and another out?

How can you torment him in this way, when you see that he is in earnest? said the cousin. Let your own heart have its way. She will not send you any more into the middle of the room, Ulric, believe me.

But she was almost in the wrong. Freneli nearly sent Ulric flying

again; and then burst into loud, convulsive weeping, which puzzled them greatly.

Ulric said if she would rather not have him, he would go, and not plague her.

The cousin was angry at first; then she became anxious, and said she would not urge her; and she really must not cry so, or the inn people would know all about it.

At last Freneli was able to speak. She said if they would leave her quiet, she would try to recover herself. She had been all her life a poor orphan, disowned from her infancy. She had never been taken on her father's knee; her mother had never kissed her; she had never been able to hide her head in loving arms; she had many a time thought she would gladly die if she might sit on some one's knee, and put her arms round some one's neck. But while she was a child, no one had loved her, and she had often cried in solitude and longed for some one whom she could love with all her heart and soul, on whose breast she could lay her head in happy confidence; but she had never found a friend to satisfy her longings. Then when she was older, and they talked to her of marriage, she made up her mind that she would never marry any one in whom she had not full confidence, whose true heart would not be all her own in sorrow and in joy, in life and death. But she had not found one of whom she could believe this. She loved Ulric, had long loved him more than she could say, but this faith in him she had not been able to find. And if she was deceived this time, if he did not love her truly, then her last hopes would be gone, and there would be no happiness for her in life!

You are a dear, foolish child, said the cousin, wiping her wet cheeks; if I had known it was only *that* you wanted, I should certainly not have grudged you a kiss more or less. But why did you not speak? People in our way of living cannot really think of everything; we have so many to provide for each day, we do not stop to consider who wants a caress.

Ulric said he had quite deserved Freneli's suspicions, but if she could look into his heart, she would see how much he loved her, and how sincerely he had spoken. He would not excuse himself, he had several times thought of marrying, but he had never loved another. He would not urge her; he must leave it now in God's name, and submit himself to His will.

You hear now, said the cousin, how dear you are to him. Take your glass and drink a health with Ulric, and promise that you will be tenant-farmer's wife at the Steinbrucke.

Freneli stood up, took her glass, and drank the health, but promised nothing. She begged them to say no more to her that day. On the morrow she would give her answer.

You are a strange creature, said the cousin. Now, Ulric, put the horse in; they will wonder what has become of us.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE KNOTS BEGIN TO LOOSEN

"The redemption . . . is by the wisdom and virtue of a woman."—*Sesame and Lilies*, § 57.

The stars shone in the dark blue sky, a thin mist rested on the damp meadows, while single streaks of white vapour detached themselves and floated here and there above the valleys; soft winds blew on the moist leaves; here and there a cow, forgotten in the pastures, called to her forgetful master, and a boisterous lad sent his shouts far and near. The excitement of the day rocked the cousin into deep sleep, and Ulric, straining every nerve, kept back the spirited horse at a moderate pace. Freneli was alone. She reflected on her solitary condition; she felt herself as isolated as one of the stars floating above her in the boundless blue sea of limitless space. If she were to leave her cousins or lose them, she had no home in the world to turn to in case of illness, no creature in whom she could confide, no human being to smile or weep with her, to mourn for her when she died, or to follow her to her last narrow resting-place. There might be a long, solitary life before her; she might go on from year to year with lessening strength and courage, become old, infirm, despised, and find no shelter, except from the charity of others.

New sorrow seized her heart, and complaints and questionings arose in her mind. Why, she asked, does the good Father, whose name is love, leave such poor children alone in the world, to be disowned in childhood, misled in youth, despised in age? Then she began to feel that such thoughts of God were sinful and ungrateful. He *had* cared for her, and shielded her innocence, and He was opening a way for her to a rich provision. Then as the tops of mountains and the tips of trees emerge from mist, so she perceived the many signs of love which had been about her path: she had enjoyed happier days than many, many poor children; she had been with good people, who, if they had not taken her to their heart like father and mother, had yet loved her, and brought her up so that she might face the world with self-respect. No, she dared not complain of this good Father above; she felt that His hand had guided her. Was not His hand directing her now? Had He not taken pity on the poor solitary maid, and decreed that the longings of her heart should be stilled? He had helped her to be good and pure, and now He gave her a true heart in which she could confide, one who was all her own to love, who would weep at her death, and go with her on the sorrowful way to the grave. Such, indeed, was Ulric, the faithful, capable man whom she had so long loved in her secret heart. He had thought, indeed, that

money could give happiness, but who could bring against him any other reproach? And how honestly and humbly he had regretted his error. Had not a kind Providence brought them to the same place, kept Ulric there, sent Elisi away, and inclined the cousin to take a tenant for the farm? Ought she to despise what was offered to her? Was it anything hard or repelling that she had to consider?

New pictures began to form themselves in her mind, and to fill in the empty future. Ulric was her husband; she was established in life; she was the central point of a large, well-ordered, prosperous household. This picture came before her eyes in a hundred forms, and in colours of ever-increasing brightness and beauty. She did not know that she was in the little chaise; her heart was light, as if she already breathed in a world where sorrow and sin were no more. Then the carriage went over a stone. Freneli did not feel it, but the cousin awoke, and recovering herself with much yawning and difficulty, asked, Oh where are we? But I have not been asleep!

Ulric replied, If you will look there, you will see our lights through the trees.

Gracious! Then I *have* been asleep. I could not have believed it. I hope Joggeli will not scold because we are so late.

It will not make any difference, said Ulric; the horse can rest to-morrow; we shall not need to use him.

Oh, then, said the mistress, it does not matter. But it is a great shame to take a horse home late and out early. Only think if it was one's self, to be made to go and go, and have no time for eating and sleeping!

This time the dwellers at the Steinbrucke appeared at the door with lights and lanterns as soon as they heard the wheels, some going to the horse, some to the carriage. Even Joggeli hobbled out, and said, I thought you were not coming to-night; I was afraid that something had happened.

There was much talking and questioning, as is usually the case when the house-mother returns home late; but before long all was still at the Steinbrucke, and nothing was to be heard but the munching of the black horse in his stable. Sweet sleep had fallen upon its inmates, bringing forgetfulness of sorrow and the presence of fair images to the unconscious mind. But no! upon one bed sleep did not descend. The maiden who rested in it under a soft feather coverlet had a heart too deeply moved to take the seal of sleep. Lovely visions floated before her mind, some passing quickly, others lingering with the happy maid, who did not toss hither and thither seeking sleep, but eluded it hour after hour. When fresh morning breezes blew through the valley, a sweet but anxious desire began to arise in Freneli's heart—the desire to tell Ulric that she would be his for evermore. The more urgent this desire became, the more it had to struggle with anxiety lest the desired happiness should be only a dream, lest Ulric should have disappeared in the morning, or should have changed his mind through vexation with her behaviour. How much her hesitation now grieved her; how incomprehensible it seemed; how she longed to compensate for it, and to know whether Ulric's intentions were the same. She could not stay in bed any longer; she got up gently, opened a little window, breathed the morning air, dressed herself, and

began her morning work quietly, so that no one should hear her. She opened the door gently; all was still outside; no servant was yet stirring. Then she went softly to the fountain to wash herself there, according to the usual custom. But a figure already stood beside it with the same intention, eagerly bent over the trough. With a bounding heart, Freneli recognised her Ulric. Night and mist disappeared, and the glow of morning passed over her. Her playfulness overcame her strong maidenly impulse to reserve; she approached Ulric with noiseless steps, and quickly put both her hands over his eyes. The strong man started violently; a half-cry escaped him; then, seizing the hands, he recognised whose they were with inexpressible delight. Is it thou? he asked. Freneli's hands fell lower and embraced her lover, and without a word, she laid her head on his breast. As the water flowed clear and bright from the fountain, so the consciousness of his happiness flowed into Ulric's heart. He drew the dear maiden to himself, was not repulsed this time, but was allowed to whisper his love and joy. Wilt thou be mine? was, however, audible with the rippling of the water; Art *thou* mine? was murmured back again. The fountain accompanied many words besides these;—but never repeated any of them.

While young, blissful hearts were meeting at the fountain, an old couple had a less agreeable conversation. Joggeli and his wife awoke early, and considered this time a suitable one for a confidential word with each other. She asked if any servant had applied during her absence. Christmas was drawing near, and something would have to be done. Then Joggeli renewed his lamentations about Elisi's marriage, which was not his doing, and which robbed him of Ulric. Since he had been there, the farm had produced five hundred gulden more annually. If the girl must needs marry, he had far rather she had taken Ulric than that insatiable cotton merchant. He had no wish to look out for another servant. If Ulric would only stay on, he would give whatever he asked.

She did not know how that could be managed. She had talked with Ulric, and he would not hear of being servant any longer.

That is always the way, said Joggeli; women desire to rule and to please themselves, but when anything goes crooked, the men have to make it straight again. He had told her before how it would be. She might look out for a servant herself.

She replied that in that case she would have no more to do with anything. Who would suffer, if all went wrong, but she, who had to do the housekeeping? The best plan would be to let the estate. She saw no reason to fret herself into her grave for those who would only laugh at her pains.

That would suit him also, said Joggeli. He saw no use in planting, just that the son-in-law might come and take the produce, and keep the money it fetched. He had certainly had a sufficient portion, and he thought he might be satisfied now, and leave him in peace. If she knew of a suitable tenant, he would settle the matter that very day.

She said she knew of no one better than Ulric.

Ulric! said Joggeli. Yes, if he had sufficient capital and a suitable wife; but as it is, he could not undertake it.

The mother said there could be no better wife for him than Freneli,

and she believed they had nothing against each other. Besides, Ulric was not altogether without means; and she believed Cousin John would help him if necessary; he seemed to think a great deal of him.

Ho! ho! said Joggeli. So it is all arranged!

Arranged? asked she.

Yes, said Joggeli. Do you think I cannot see through it? You did not go deliberately to Erdopfelkof, and take Freneli and Ulric with you, for nothing. You need not think me such an idiot as not to perceive this plotting behind my back. You ought not to treat me as if I were imbecile, and carry on your plans with strangers. But you shall see who is master here.

The good woman tried explanation and conciliation, but she received no other answer, so that she said at last, Then be master, as far as I am concerned; work the farm yourself, and do the housekeeping. I will have nothing more to say to it.

She turned to the other side, went to sleep again, and got up later than usual in the morning, silent and vexed. Freneli, on the contrary, was as gay as a lark. She tripped merrily about the house, as if her feet went to music. The mistress looked at her with utter astonishment, and said when they were alone, Have you changed your mind since last night? Will you have him now?

Oh, cousin, said Freneli, if you will compel me, what can I do? If you will have it so, have it; but it will not be my doing, come what will! *

You are a graceless girl to mock my husband to me, said the cousin, and your laughing will soon come to an end when you hear that he will not have a tenant. He is vexed because it was planned behind his back, and says he will show that he is master.

But Freneli's laughter did not come to an end; she said the cousin would have to be compelled, as she had been. It would be the best plan to say nothing more to him, but to go on as if they were leaving. He was already uneasy as to what he could do at Christmas, and he could not decide on another servant. If he said nothing in the course of a week, she would send for the joiner, and order a large box, such as maid-servants have when they are going elsewhere. If this had no effect, he must be told that it had been ascertained that Ulric was going to John; then he would take up the matter himself and say, Have your own way about it, if you are determined, but it will not be *my* fault, come what may.

You are a witch, said the cousin; I believe you would be able to befool a whole consistory. That would never have come into my mind, and I have been married to Joggeli nearly forty years!

Freneli instructed Ulric to behave as if he had no anxiety, and it turned out just as she had foreseen; there was even no occasion to send for the joiner. Long before a week had elapsed, Joggeli began to grumble that his wife did everything behind his back, placed confidence in every one else, and none in him; he would like to know at last what she had made out with Ulric; it was time for him also to be informed. She said she had done nothing, and meant to do nothing; it was his affair, and she

* Freneli playing a little bit of Joggeli, mimicking his voice.

did not meddle with it; he had told her that he was master. Joggeli complained still more that his wife did not trouble herself about what was her concern as well as his; he did not know why all must fall upon him. He wanted her to go and talk to Ulric, and say if he would marry some one else, and not Freneli, he had no objection to him as tenant; but she had for a long time looked so brazen and saucy, he had often longed to give her a slap in the face. But his wife, instructed by Freneli, maintained that it was his business, and would not go. Then he said he would write to the son-in-law, who would readily send him either a servant or a tenant. Then the wife's heart sank, and she took up the commission. When she went to Freneli, the girl said, Oh, you good mother, have you let yourself be compelled? But, cousin, cousin, how could you believe that Joggeli was in earnest? If you had once more said, No, decidedly, he would have said, Well, then, if you will do nothing to please me, I will talk to Ulric; but I do not want that wench Freni. But send Ulric to him; the master must and shall speak with him about it formally and seriously. And so it happened.

From that time forward * all went well for Ulric, better than he expected, and, as he himself felt, better than he deserved. He thought of what his old master had said: A good name is real capital, and worth more than money and lands. The rent was reasonable; the chief consideration was, what was to be given into the bargain. The son helped himself to anything that took his fancy; he said he ought to have something answering to the corn and brandy which the son-in-law had taken. The tenants were to have possession, not only of the stock and implements, but also of the house furniture and servants' beds, so that if the owners chose to take up the farm again, they could do so without ruinous expense. There were certain conditions attached to the low rent. Ulric must feed a cow and two pigs for Joggeli, supply him with potatoes, sow one measure of flax seed and two of hemp for him, and let him have a horse whenever he wanted one. When people wish to make difficulties, each clause may be a stone of stumbling; but when they are agreed in main points, the details follow easily.

Ulric and Freneli would have very little to buy, so they could reserve most of their money. Freneli's promised outfit was not forgotten, and she received a bed and a linen-press such as are seldom seen. The son, without waiting for them to choose a piece of furniture, sent a magnificent cradle, which Freneli for a long time would not allow to be brought into the house: she persisted that there must be some mistake.

Ulric had now a great deal on his mind. He was constantly occupied with thoughts and plans for field and house and stable. Sometimes he was uneasy about the corn, sometimes about the rape-seed, sometimes about the grass; and even in midwinter, when the north wind blew, he complained that there would be no hay that season. We will not enter into details of his reckoning, as he estimated his expenditure and his gains; it will be evident that a beginner, who feels that his first year of farming

* I omit some useless and painful recital of the vain endeavours of the cotton merchant and innkeeper to break through the plan. Happily they each render the other powerless.

will either take the ground from under his feet, or establish him securely, cannot look at things so coolly as an old and experienced farmer.

Ulric looked often to Him who had hitherto led him so graciously, and he never forgot his fervent evening thanksgivings; but the stormy sea of his thoughts was disturbed by many anxieties, and his ears were too often closed to the whisperings of peace. Freneli often complained that he was no longer the Ulric of former days; he did not laugh and joke, and she might talk for an hour without getting an answer. If she had known that the time of betrothal was so dull, she told him, she would have sent him to seek some one else. Instead of chatting with *her*, he was always considering which would be most profitable, a mare or two sows, or which cows gave the most milk, the dappled red or all black. When Freneli thus lovingly upbraided Ulric, he would expand for a while, and laugh and talk; then his seriousness would return.

Freneli had no less anxiety, but she was able to hide it; she was one of those persons who seem so light-hearted that people do not give them credit for deeper feelings. But sometimes for hours, and even for whole nights, she reflected on what would depend upon her as housewife, wondered if she should be equal to all claims, and earnestly prayed, with tearful eyes, that God would support and guide her in her difficult duties, and make her a good wife to Ulric.

Nothing of all this was apparent in the morning; the moist shining of her eyes seemed to come from the smoke in the kitchen; she went about gaily, and trilled her songs as if as free from care as a robin; and whenever she could catch Ulric, she liked to have a joke at his expense. But behind all this playfulness, there was the earnest inward thought of making him happy, and the realisation of her own joy in their mutual love.

You are the most light-hearted creature in the world, said the cousin sometimes. When I was going to be married, I cried often for a whole day, and when Joggeli came near me, I used to run away, and no one could get me back again. I do not know how you can go on as you do. And she really shook her head about her many a time, and thought to herself she could not understand the girls of the present day.

CHAPTER XXVIII

HOW AT LAST THE WEDDING TAKES PLACE

"True Fors,—the finding of the youth and maid by each other, such in character as the providence of Heaven appoints for each."—*Fors Clavigera*, Letter 36, § 5.

Fast and faster, in happy anxiety, the time drew near for Ulric to undertake the farm which was confided to his honesty and skill. The marriage with Freneli was to take place first, and this event had been talked about from the beginning of the new year, but put off from week to week. Sometimes Freneli had not had time enough to think about it; sometimes she had thought, and decided on delay. Then she said she would not marry until she could return home as mistress of the house; or the shoemaker had her Sunday shoes, and she could not go to the parson in wooden ones. As the mistress sat at the table one stormy Sunday afternoon, she said, Freneli, give me the calendar; it hangs up there. She turned over the leaves, holding it at a distance from her eyes, counted the weeks with her fat forefinger, counted again, and cried out at last, Do you know it only wants five weeks to the 15th of March, the day on which we are to give up the farm to you? You stupid girl, go directly and give in the notice. Freneli would not believe it, counted again, and thought it would be time enough for the wedding a day or two before the 15th. This the mistress would not hear of, and Ulric urged that if she did not go this Sunday, she should certainly do so in the course of the week; the parson of Ueflige would have to write to the native places of both, so that the banns might be published the following Sunday. But on Monday Freneli's shoes had not yet come from the shoemaker; on Tuesday she thought the moon too bright: she would be recognised by every one in the whole village. Wednesday was under the sign of the Crab, which frightened her, and she said that day would not do; maid-servants would not take a place on a Wednesday, and being married was still more important, because *they* could leave when they liked, and she could not. At last on Thursday they all talked seriously to Freneli, and said she could not continue this absurd behaviour. There was nothing to be ashamed of, she would have to go, and she would be glad when it was over. Happily, the shoemaker had brought the shoes; there was a wild flurry of snow, and you could scarcely see before you. When the storm was at the wildest, the hail clattered against the panes, and lay a finger deep on the window sills; when the wind howled, and the lamps would scarcely burn; when the cats took refuge by the fire, and the dog craved entrance by scratching at the kitchen door—then Freneli said at last, Now, Ulric, get ready; we will go. I don't think many people can peep at us to-night.

You are always the same wild creature, said the mistress; I would not go with you in such weather if I were Ulric; I should let you go alone.

He can please himself, said Freneli, but if he does not come, I will not go afterwards. If his love is as great as he professes it to be, the storm will be a pleasure to him.

Well, take the little chaise; Hans can drive; you will be lost in such a hurricane.

Oh, cousin, people would talk if we went in a chaise to give notice of the wedding. We should get into the calendar, and the chaise into the great Helge!

The mistress then tried to dissuade Ulric, but he said he might well bear with some fancies after his own foolish conduct; and he would go, if Freneli wished it. There would be this advantage: they could go together, instead of waiting for each other behind a hedge or a barn.

The cousin, while lamenting the folly of the proceeding, helped the girl in her preparations, and brought Joggeli's cloak and fur gloves to shield her from the inclemency of the weather.

Listen, Freneli, she said, you trifle with health and happiness; if you go on in this strange way, Ulric will end by turning you out of the house. Good gracious! when a girl behaves in this way, what kind of an old woman will she become? Strange ways increase with age, I can tell you.

When they were on the threshold, Freneli was driven back three times by the wind, and Ulric's hat was blown into the middle of the kitchen. The mother besought them not to go; but Freneli made a great effort, and disappeared into the whirling snow, and the lamentations of the mother were lost in the whistling of the wind.

It was a desperate walk, and Ulric had really to help the girl: the wind was in their faces; they often lost their way, had to stand and consider where they were, and to turn round to let the most violent gusts go by. They were quite three quarters of an hour in accomplishing the fifteen minutes' walk to the parsonage. There they shook off the snow as well as they could, and knocked at the door, but for a long time in vain; the sound was lost in the howling of the wind, which roared terribly in the chimneys. Then Freneli lost patience, and superseded Ulric's respectful knocking with such a hammering at the door that every one in the house started, and the parson's wife said, Good gracious! what is that? Her husband quieted her, and said, It must be some one who wants a child baptized, or a wedding pair who have already knocked several times, and Marie has not heard them. While Marie opened the door, he got a light, so that he might not keep the applicants waiting; and as soon as she announced two persons, he stepped out immediately.

He found the pair inside the door, Freneli standing behind Ulric. The parson was a rather short, middle-aged man, with a venerable head and good features. His countenance expressed good sense and judgment, and also much benevolence. He raised the light and stretched forward his head, then exclaimed, Oh, Ulric, is it you? In such a storm, too! And Freneli will be behind you, he added, turning the light round. And the Steinbrucke farm-folk let you come! Here, Marie, take this cloak and dry it. Marie came very willingly with her lamp. Then the lady opened the

door with a light in her hand also, and said, Bring them in here, this room is warmer, and Freneli and I are well acquainted.

Freneli stood there in the light of the three lamps, and did not well know which way to look. At last she put a good face on the matter, came forward, greeted the parson and his wife courteously, and said, with the most innocent air in the world, that her cousin and the master wished them a good evening.

But why do you come in such a storm? Did you want to be lost in it? asked the parson.

She could not well do otherwise, said Ulric, who thus began to assume the husband's part of taking the self-will of his wife on his own shoulders, a duty which a man is obliged to exercise unless he wishes to appear henpecked, or to expose the caprices of his wife. We could not venture to delay longer, he continued, because we wished the banns to be published next Sunday.

They were rather late for that, said the parson; he did not know whether the post would arrive in both places before the Sunday.

In the meantime Freneli behaved as if the matter did not concern her, and talked in a lively manner with the minister's wife about the flax, which seemed so fine and yet yielded so little.

When the formalities were at an end, the minister said to Ulric, You will be tenant of the Steinbrucke. I am very glad. You are not like many who scarcely claim to be men, still less Christians. You act like a man and a Christian.

Yes, said Ulric. How could I forget God? I have more need of Him than He of me; and if I did not remember Him, how could I hope for blessings at His hands?

That is true, Ulric, and He is blessing you richly: you have a fine farm, and you are getting a good wife. I do not refer now to work and management, though Freneli is noted for these in all the country round: but to something besides skill and industry. She seems careless and light-hearted, but I know she has deep feelings and a noble nature.

Freneli's lively interest in the flax had not caused her to lose a word of this conversation; she had pretended not to hear it at first; but at this point she could not help saying, Perhaps, sir, you have too much confidence in me.

No, Freneli, said the minister. I look unperceived into many a heart at the time of religious instruction. I hear more than many people think, and I divine much. For instance, is it not *your* fault that you have come through such fearful weather? I wish with all my heart that this may be the roughest, wildest journey you will ever take together during your married life. As to the trials which come from God, we know they all work for good; but I may well wish that your path may never be made hard and difficult through the faults of either of you. Two souls who are one in God may bear what comes from His hand, but when the self-will, caprice, or passion of man or wife brings misfortune, and the innocent one must share the bitter cup, and think how different all would be but for the other's fault, this is miserable indeed, and the way through life becomes more stormy than your way here to-night. And when life is near its close, and people's eyes are opened to see that they have themselves raised

tempests on their path, and troubled that existence which they should have made happy and peaceful, when they see that the journey has been a weary one, which they might have made smooth and glad—then, Freneli, think of the self-reproach which must darken the conscience and oppress the soul.

She blushed deeply, and her eyes filled with tears.

But, my dear, said the minister's wife, it is very embarrassing for poor Freneli. I myself shrink from hearing you speak so severely, and you are not sure that it is as you think.

I may mistake, said the parson, but an earnest word is suitable for this serious occasion. You will remember all your lives the dreadful storm and the difficult walk; then the friendly warning will also recur to your minds, even if this were not Freneli's fault, so that each of you will take care not to bring sorrow or suffering on the other; and you will try to remember that we are here to sweeten life to each other, and not to make it bitter and burdensome. St. Paul says marriage is a mystery; but he also describes the key to it in the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. If I have done you injustice, Freneli, do not be angry with me; I think you must know that I meant it kindly.

Then Freneli's tears began to flow. She offered her hand to the minister, and said, You are more than right; it was my fault, and I have been a very wilful girl. I will never forget what you have said to me; it will be a warning to me all my life. I had no ill intention, and I did not think it would turn out as it has done; but I had a great dislike to giving notice of the banns, and I did everything I could think of to delay coming. I will never forget your kind, true words.

Then the maid came in with the plates to spread the table. Freneli remarked it, and stood up to take leave, although the parson's wife said there was no hurry; she and Ulric must stay and have supper with them. But Freneli said they must go, or the cousin would think they were lost, thanked the parson once more right heartily, and begged him to promise to go and see them when they were settled; they could offer him and the lady coffee, if they might make so free. She should be delighted to see them arrive. Wishing them much happiness in the sacred marriage state, the parson himself lighted them out, holding the lamp high, and sending greetings also to the cousin and the master.

The storm had abated. Jagged clouds were driving through the sky; single stars glimmered in the light spaces between them; the earth was wrapped in a white garment of snow. They walked silently through the village, where the inhabitants sat behind their little window-panes at dim lamps. The spinning-wheels whirred merrily, and many a Hans and Joggi lounged about the stoves. Here and there a dog barked at them, otherwise they were unperceived, and their caution in going quietly through the village was quite superfluous. But their hearts were full,—much that was serious, and much that was bright, passed through their minds, while the clouds drove rapidly by, and the stars came out in ever-increasing number, until the last cloud disappeared, and each glittering gem beamed above them in clear sky, while the dim lamps of the village were left far behind. Then Freneli silently embraced her Ulric, and both raised moistened eyes to the beaming heaven. The silent stars heard

holy vows and shone upon the sacred thoughts which filled the hearts of the happy bridal pair; they went quietly on their homeward way, which God had spread for them with the unspotted snow, emblem of peace and purity.

The important day approached. The old people had already withdrawn to the detached apartments, and the mistress was having the house thoroughly cleaned, though Freneli objected, saying that so much scouring, at that cold season, was useless and unhealthy. It was of no avail; people should not have it to say after her death that she had not cleaned her house before she went out of it! The joiner had brought his work, tailors and sempstresses had, with much urging, got done at last, but the shoemaker enjoyed keeping them waiting; his motto was, "They will stay till I come." Freneli declared that he should never make another pair of shoes for her, if she went barefoot; and she kept her word.

On the day before the marriage Freneli went about the house quietly and seriously; perhaps she had never talked so little as on that day; she often felt inclined to shed tears, yet she had a pleasant smile for those whom she met in the house. Sometimes she forgot time, and space, and all things around her, and was so entirely engrossed by her reflections, that when some question recalled her to consciousness, she seemed to have fallen suddenly from another world.

While they sat at the evening meal, they all started at the report of firing on the hill near the house. It was the servants and day-labourers, who wished thus to announce to all the country round their goodwill at the marriage of their new master and mistress. No discordant horn-blowing sounded, no rude mob, excited by envy or hostility, disturbed the peaceful evening. The mistress was not sparing with her advice, intermingled with a variety of jokes; and she took care to add warm shoes, and gloves, and everything she could think of to shelter them from the cold of the frosty morning. They were to set off very early.

Ulric wished the marriage to be celebrated at Muhliwald, his native place, where Cousin John lived. He said it would cost less there, but another reason influenced him; he wished to show off his beautiful bride and handsome chaise before those who had known him as the good-for-nothing lad of former days, and looked forward to relating many histories of the kindness of others, which had helped to make him what he was.

Unexpectedly, Joggeli went to him late in the evening, and said, praise and flattery were not much in his line, but he had shown his satisfaction by his deeds; he would not have given the farm at so low a rent to a stranger. His son-in-law had written to him only the day before, pressing him to have an auction, and promising him five or six per cent. interest on the capital thus gained. But he would abide by his agreement, and he wished him to accept a little token of his goodwill; he then gave him a packet of money towards the expenses of the next day. I know that you are a saving man, he added, and that you like to keep your money together, but to-morrow you must not grudge a little outlay. Saving is a fine thing, but a man must not look at every kreutzer on his wedding-day! It is a bad omen if the young wife comes home sad and half-starved.

Ulric declined at first, and thanked Joggeli for all the tokens of his goodwill, promising that he would show himself mindful of the favours he

had received; then took the money at last, though he said it was not required, and he had already laid something aside for the occasion. Then the mother laughed, and said she did not think it could be much. She knew his ways. He might perhaps have set apart a new thaler. He would not like to change a larger coin.

When it is hard work to earn money, one counts every batz before spending it, said Ulric; I cannot now understand how people can squander carelessly in one day what they have earned hardly in six days. But to-morrow I do not wish to be sparing. I should like to invite my old master and mistress. I should not grudge two crowns or sixty batzen.

Joggeli, who seldom thoroughly enjoyed a laugh, now joined his wife in a hearty peal. You will not ruin yourself if you invite guests and spend no more than that, said he; it is well that I have added something to it, or the horse would be hungered, and you would have a long face for many a day, because you had been at so much expense; and so would Freni, from being nearly famished. Good-night.

But Ulric had not by any means a good night. They were to start at three o'clock in the morning; the hours were few, but they seemed very long. Ulric could not sleep, many things occupied his mind; he tossed about uneasily, and looked at his watch very frequently. The whole importance of what he was undertaking weighed heavily on his mind, and delightful pictures of Freneli in all her charms danced before his closed eyes. The hour in which ghosts walk was not long past when he left his bed to feed the horse and groom him well for the occasion. Then he went to the fountain, and as he bent over the basin, mischievous hands again encircled him, and Freneli brought him a sweet morning greeting. A presentiment had taken her to the fountain, and they embraced in the cold morning air, as if mild evening breezes were fanning them. All Ulric's anxieties vanished, and he quickly made the preparations for the journey. He was soon ready to go in and have some hot coffee which Freneli had made, and some white bread and cheese which the cousin had provided. The girl had not much quiet time at the table, she was continually getting up for fear of forgetting something, and the mistress's warmly-lined shoes were nearly left behind. When she stood there quite ready, handsome and well-dressed, the two maids, whose curiosity had got them out of bed, went round her with their lamps, and were so lost in admiration, that they forgot that oil makes spots and fire kindles. Freneli had to be on her guard against the consequences. The poor maids each thought that if she had equally fine clothes, she would look as beautiful as Freneli, and perhaps drive to a wedding with as handsome a bridegroom.

Long before three o'clock, they set off in the cold frosty morning air. They drove with glad hearts to meet the hour in which their life-bond was to be consecrated; a delightful confidence in each other and in God had formed itself in their souls; they did not doubt about their happiness. Ulric kissed his Freneli, and ventured to remark that her glowing cheeks were very unlike Elisi's cold ones. Freneli did not take this amiss, but rejoined that what was past was done with and she wished to forget it. But for the future she would beg him to refrain from ascertaining whether other people's cheeks were cold or hot. The stars began to pale, the air

was very cold at the approach of dawn, and Freneli expressed a wish to go into a warm room. They therefore stopped at the next inn, which was comfortless enough so early in the morning.

Eight batzen already! said Ulric as he paid the reckoning; and one batz to the ostler makes nine! It is well Joggeli gave me something.

Then he drew out the little packet: it was one of those which pass in the canton of Berne as change of a large thaler, to save the trouble of counting. When he opened it, he found that it contained more than six large thalers in five-batz pieces, and some smaller change besides. He was almost frightened when he saw them unwrapped, and kept saying, Look! Freneli, look what Joggeli gave me! If I had known it was so much, I should have thanked him more.

It is only a pleasure deferred, said Freneli; the chief thing is that you have his present. I should not have expected it from him. He might have given *me* something too! He never once asked me if I had a kreutzer, and he knows it is a bad omen if a bride has not a coin in her pocket. But I think he would enjoy it, if I had not the spending of a batz all my lifetime!

There, said Ulric, take half; it belongs to you as much as to me.

No, Ulric, said Freneli; what are you thinking of? I have money enough, and if I had not, what is yours, is mine. Depend upon it, I will be a good wife to you, if you act towards me as a husband should. But if you try to take the upper hand, and consider that I must not act freely, or spend when I think proper, you will see the result. I have always had to be on the defensive, every one has wished to oppress me, and no one has been able to do so. You know I can be very wilful. I believe you would gain as little as the rest by opposition.

But we will not try it, said Ulric. You turn every one round your finger, and I am sure I should have no chance with you. Indeed we will not even joke about it, my dear, or the Evil One will try to turn joke into earnest. I once heard my grandmother say that it was very important what people talked about on their wedding morning, and the nearer they got to the church the more important it became. They ought to think only of the good God, and talk of His angels who live in peace and joy together, ministering good things to men,—and to beseech Him to abide with them morning and evening, in the house and in the field, in the heart and in the life, so that no evil spirit should gain power over them, or come between them in any way. She has often told me how uneasy it made her when my father and mother entered the church, laughing and joking, with no thought beyond worldly matters. It was not long before evil spirits came: both were early taken from this world, and we, poor children, were in everybody's way, and given up to ruin, if God, praised be His name, had not taken special pity upon us. But I cannot forget my grandmother's words, and the nearer we get, the more serious my heart becomes. The day of marriage resembles the day of death: one goes through a door and one does not know what is at the other side. There may be happiness or misery—happiness sweeter than we can imagine, or misery greater than we can picture. My heart beats violently! I am almost ashamed, but I cannot hide it.

My father never led my mother to church, said Freneli, and I have had

to suffer for it. As long as they lived, I was knocked about and repulsed by every one, but God took pity on the desolate child. Perhaps a pious grandmother prayed for me also, or was sent by the dear Lord to guard and protect me. Ulric, I should not like other poor children to suffer for our sins. I am more seriously disposed than you think, but I have often put on a cheerful air to hide my deep sadness, and driven away tears with laughter to avoid the remarks of others. And God forbid that we should struggle for the mastery! I have given myself to you, and I will obey you as long as you love me; I will not be cross nor quarrelsome, and I will do all I can to make you love me more and more. But if you were to tyrannise, and try to make a slave of me, I believe I should become a terrible woman. You will not do it, however; and I could throw myself into the fire for one who loves me. See, I promise you that I will set the Lord always before me, and we will pray to Him together, when you will. But do not be vexed if I laugh, and sing, and joke: I never feel so good as when I am right glad of heart. My soul then seems to overflow with love to God, and the desire to do something for every one.

God forbid, said Ulric; I like laughter and merriment as well as any one, but when I saw the church tower of Muhliwald, my grandmother's saying came into my mind, and I thought that as people go seriously to take the Holy Communion, so, upon every approach to God, they should consider what they are doing, and beg Him to help them to keep their vows. Look! there are doves flying to meet us, a whole flock; there are two white ones flying together; that is a good omen of peace and unity. It is as if God had sent them for our sakes, as a sign that all will be well. Do you not think so?

Freneli pressed Ulric's hand, and both remained silent, filled with devout thoughts, until the ostler took the reins from Ulric's hand, saying, It is very cold this morning.

It was one of the good old inns which do not change hands every year, but remain in the same family from generation to generation. They were just at breakfast when the pair arrived; they recognised Ulric, gave them a friendly reception, and insisted on their immediately joining them, —all was quite ready, and nothing would do them so much good on a cold morning as a cup of hot coffee. Freneli said she was ashamed, it was not mannerly to sit down to table as if she was at home. But the hostess had her way, and congratulated Ulric on his charming wife, remarking that it was long since so beautiful a bride had been seen at Muhliwald. She was glad he had prospered so well,—every one had been sorry when he went away, and they would all rejoice to hear of his welfare. Of course there are always some people, she added, who look askance at the happiness of others, but they are few in number.

Ulric asked if the minister would be up at that hour; the hostess thought he might, as it was a Friday; he was not a very early riser; but he was an old man, and it was therefore excusable. One winter he had a lazy curate who would never see any one before eight o'clock in the morning. Then Ulric asked if it would be according to custom for him to take Freneli with him. No, she said, the bride seldom went to the parsonage until afterwards, when they went together to fetch the certificate.

Those who were very shy, or who were afraid of what the parson might say to them, returned directly to the inn after the ceremony, and the bridegroom went alone. Ulric gave directions that a message should be sent to invite his old master and his wife, and set out for the parsonage.

The minister at first did not know him in his handsome clothes, in the imperfectly lighted room; but as soon as he recognised him, he was heartily glad to see him. I have heard, he said, that you are doing well, that you are becoming tenant of a fine farm, you are getting an excellent wife, and you have saved a good deal of money. I rejoice to celebrate a marriage which I believe to be blessed of God. I rejoice in the character which you must have acquired for honesty and godliness before so much would be entrusted to you. Temporal and spiritual good are more nearly connected than people sometimes think. They believe that they must put their Christianity on one side, if they wish to stand well with the world; but it is exactly the opposite, and this false view precipitates many into a life of care and misery. Take yourself for an example, Ulric; if you had continued in your old ways, what kind of a wedding-day would you have had? what kind of a wife? what kind of prospects? Compare that situation with your present one. Judge of the difference. Does it come from blind destiny, or chance, or luck? Would you have had this good fortune if you had remained bad and worthless? The misfortune is, that people wish to become rich through luck and chance, and not through the blessing of God on just and diligent effort. And it is only right that those who depend upon luck are deceived by luck, until they are brought to acknowledge that luck is nothing, and God's blessing is everything.

Yes, sir, said Ulric, I cannot tell you how well off I am, compared to what I was, as one of the worst young men about the country. But there is something in luck after all, or else I should never have got such good master, and I should have come to nothing.

Oh, Ulric, said the parson, was that luck, or the Providence of God

It is the same thing, I think, answered Ulric.

Yes, said the minister, you may so understand it, but the way in which you regard it makes all the difference. He who talks of luck does not think of God, seek His favour, or return Him thanks; he seeks luck from and in the world. He who speaks of Providence, thinks of God, thanks Him, seeks His good pleasure, sees His guidance in everything; he knows nothing of good or bad luck, all is to him God's gracious hand, leading him on to blessedness. This different way of speaking is the expression of a different way of thinking, and an altogether different view of life. As there is such a difference in words, it is important which one uses. And if you will observe well, you will see that the talk of luck can only make a man light-hearted or melancholy; but the talk of God's providence raises good thoughts in us, and lifts our eyes to Him.

Yes, indeed, said Ulric, you are right. I cannot gainsay it.

You will bring your bride to me after the service?

Very gladly, said Ulric, if you desire it; but we shall hinder you.

It will not hinder me, said the parson; it is not only my duty, but my pleasure, to speak a word on these serious occasions; the soil is prepared, and the seed will bring forth fruit.

In the meantime Freneli had drawn off her woollen boots, and put on

the pretty Bernese cap, on which the hostess fastened the bridal wreath. She remarked: This is after the Langthal fashion; but whatever fashion it is, it becomes you well. My fingers burn sometimes when I have to fasten wreaths on the heads of brides who have visibly no right to wear them. I cannot think why there are not stricter laws. It is said that the gentlemen of the government favour the bad as much as the good. I do not know. I have never been in Berne since the Austrians came; but that is what people say. I do not inquire; what have I to do with the gentry? It goes against me when one of them comes to the inn. They are so haughty, that they do not even answer if one gives them a greeting; and if one holds out one's hand, they hesitate to give theirs; they do not take off their gloves, yet they are afraid of soiling them.

The bells began to ring: Ulric grasped Freneli's hand, and walked with her towards the church.

The bride and bridegroom entered the church reverently; they separated, one to the right, the other to the left. They saw a child received into the covenant of the Lord, and thought, if they had ever to present one of their own for baptism, how joyfully they would promise to bring it up in the fear of the Lord. When the pastor stepped back from the font, Ulric brought Freneli, and both stood at the rails; they sank on their knees, clasped each other's hands, prayed and praised as the words directed, and their hearts swelled with indescribable emotion as they took the vow which bound them to each other. When they stood up, they felt steadfast, and of good courage; they were both assured that they had won a treasure for time and for eternity.

Outside the church, Ulric asked his wife to go with him for the certificate. At first she declined, thinking her presence unnecessary. She went, however, and not now in a shamefaced manner, but as the happy wife of an honourable man; and Freneli, as we know, was not deficient in dignity.

The minister received them most kindly. He was a tall, thin, venerable man, one of those who combine seriousness with graciousness of demeanour, so that hearts opened to him as if touched by a magic wand.

When he looked at Freneli, he asked, What think you, Ulric, is it through luck or God's Providence that you have this good wife?

Sir, you are right, said Ulric, I regard her as a gift of God.

And you, young mistress, what is your opinion?

I believe, answered Freneli, that the good God has united us.

I believe it also, said he; but why has He united you? That you may make each other happy, not only here, but also there—do not forget that. Marriage is God's sanctuary on earth, in which people should sanctify and purify themselves for heaven. You are both good, and pious, and honest, but you have both faults. I know one of yours, for instance, Ulric, which tightens its hold upon you; it is avarice. You will have some also, Freneli, though I do not know them. These faults will become visible on both sides, your wife will be the first to perceive yours, you will be aware of them from her manner; and so with hers. Each will be a mirror to the other, a moral power of great influence. From love to your wife, you will try to correct your faults, because she will suffer the most from them; and you, mistress, must help him with all gentleness. You

must also acknowledge your own faults, and try to amend them for Ulric's sake, and he will help you likewise. When this work becomes too difficult, God sends child after child, each is an angel to sanctify and bless; each teaches us afresh to present ourselves rightly before God, and implants a new desire to be pleasing to Him. The more you are penetrated by these sentiments, the happier you will be in heaven, and on earth, for believe me, true earthly happiness is found on the way which leads to life eternal. The good God has brought you together that you may help each other, and be a support and staff on the narrow, difficult way; that you may make a sometimes thorny path more smooth and easy for each other by the gentleness and patience of love. And if evil days come, embittered by the faults of either, do not think it is bad luck that makes you unhappy, but be sure that God, who has known the dispositions of each, has brought you together just for this very purpose, to improve and educate each other. And as love sent the Redeemer to men, as love brought Him to the Cross for men, so love must be your motive power; it surpasses all others to heal and to amend. People can but oppress each other with complaints and reproaches, with threats and blows; they cannot make each other better, or more pleasing to God. Generally violence begets violence, and the home becomes a torment. So never forget that God has brought you together, and He will demand each from the hand of the other. Husband, He will say, where is thy wife's soul? Wife, where is thy husband's soul? Act so that you may with one voice reply, Lord, we are both here, at Thy good pleasure. Mistress, forgive me, I have spoken seriously this morning, but it is better to listen now, than for Ulric to suffer through your faults; it is better for him also, than if he had to reproach himself later for bringing you to misery. But I do not believe such a thing of either of you. You look to me as if God and man would have joy in you both.

Freneli's tears filled her eyes, and she said with an agitated voice, Oh, sir, you shall have thanks a hundred times for this good advice. I shall think of it as long as I live. It will give us great pleasure if you will visit us when you are in our neighbourhood, to see that your words have borne fruit.

The minister said he should probably be able to see them soon; though they lived a long way off, he should consider them as belonging to his cure, and he hoped they would do the same. No one could rejoice more than he should in their happiness, and if he could serve them in any way they must be sure to let him know.

Then they took leave, glowing with the sense of trust and kindliness, which should ever be the result of human intercourse. If this were always so, God's earth would be a happy place.

I like that minister, said Freneli, as they were going out; he looks at things seriously, and yet he is so truly kind. I could listen to him all day.

When they arrived at the inn, they heard that Farmer Boden had accepted the invitation, but his wife was not able to leave home. Then Freneli said, You must drive off and fetch her; you will be back again in half-an-hour.

I should not like to distress our horse, said Ulric, he has far enough to

go to-day; but I dare say our host can let me have another for that little distance.

The host did so willingly. When Ulric arrived, John was not yet dressed, and his wife had great scruples about spending time in an inn on a week day, unless she was a sponsor. Ulric should have brought his wife to *them,* she said, instead of going to expense at an inn; they had plenty for them to eat and drink. Ulric said he knew that very well; but it would have been encroaching on their kindness; also, it would have been too far, he must get back that day, he had a great deal on his hands now. But they must really come, or he should be grieved, and think that they were ashamed to be seen with them.

How can you talk in that way, Ulric? said the wife; you know very well how highly we esteem you. I had better not come, if you have such thoughts.

She got ready, however, but would not allow her daughter to go too, as Ulric wished. Why not have the cat and the dog, too? said she; it is quite too much for me to go. Only wait, you will find other ways of spending your money. A large household is a serious expense.

Freneli had watched for them eagerly. The passers-by all looked at her, and said, Who is that beautiful bride? one seldom sees such a handsome woman. The talk about her went through the whole village, and whoever could make any excuse, went over to the inn to look at her.

At last Ulric appeared, with his old mistress, and Freneli received her guests very warmly. So you are married now! I greet you in God's name, said the farmer's wife; and stretched out her round plump hand to Freneli: I always thought you were going to be a pair; no two people could suit each other better.

Yes, but there was nothing in it then. They only began to plague me on the way home, and I believe you had a little to do with it, said Freneli, turning to John, and offering him her hand. I shall have something to say to you for disposing of me so finely without my own consent. I ought to be able to pay you out in some way for making arrangements for me behind my back.

John answered in the same style, and Freneli met his words with playful cleverness. When she was away for a moment, the farmer's wife said: Ulric, you have a remarkably well-mannered wife. She would not be out of place in any gentleman's house, and she can work as well as she can talk; the two do not always go together. Take care of her, you will never find such another.

Then the tears came into Ulric's eyes, and he praised Freneli until she came back again. Of course they stopped suddenly at her entrance; she looked mischievously from one to the other, and said, Ah, I see you have begun again; a little bird has told me. Is it right of you, Ulric, to begin to complain of me as soon as I turn my back?

It has been just the other way, said the farmer's wife; and I have been telling him to take care of you, he would never get such another. If men knew, she added, how things go with a second wife, they would take better care of the first. Not that I have to complain; my husband is a man to be loved and honoured, but I see how it is in other cases.

Ah, Eisi, said John, I was waiting for the end of your speech, my reputation was rather in danger. But you are right; in many cases wives are badly treated; as in others, the husbands are tormented by their wives. The only safeguard of a home is the firm belief that there is a God in heaven, and that we are responsible to Him for ourselves, and for one another.

Then they were invited into the back room, where dinner was served. Freneli acted hostess with graceful kindliness, helping, pressing, pouring out; all felt happy, and at ease. Ulric consulted the farmer as to the stable regulation, profitable planting, suitable soil, and culture. John instructed in a fatherly manner, asked questions in return, and Ulric shared his experiences with him. The women listened at first; then Freneli sought counsel in her turn from Eisi, on the hundred and one matters which farmers' wives know so well, telling her how she had managed hitherto, and asking if she might not do better. Eisi unfolded her mysteries with delight, but often said, I dare say your way is as good, but you can try mine. The familiar homeliness attracted the host and hostess, who were sensible people; both helped to advise and suggest, and testified their pleasure in much that they heard. Ulric and Freneli listened with deference to the experiences of the older people, and the afternoon passed very quickly. Suddenly the setting sun threw a golden beam into the room, and illuminated every object. Freneli started up. So late already, she exclaimed, we must be off, Ulric.

You need not hurry, said the hostess, the moon will have risen before it is dark.

How the afternoon has passed, said the farmer's wife; I do not know when the time has seemed so short.

So it has been with me, said the hostess. It is very different with many wedding-parties who can do nothing but drink and play, so that one has a weary time of it.

The farmer's wife gave Freneli her hand, saying, You have become very dear to me, and I will not let you go until you promise that you will soon come and see us.

Most willingly, said Freneli, as soon as it is possible; I have felt as if I was talking to a mother; and if we lived nearer, you would perhaps see me too often. But Ulric and I shall have our hands full, and we shall not be able to leave home readily. You must promise to come to us; you have grown-up children, and you know that all will go on just the same in your absence.

Yes, I will come, I promise you. John has said many a time that I should be astonished if I could see the Steinbrucke. And listen to me, if you should ever be in want of a godmother, don't trouble to look far for one.

In the meantime, Ulric having paid the bill and had the horse put to, poured out, and urged on every one the parting cup. Then came the host with a bottle of an old vintage, and said he wished to do honour to the young couple. He was heartily glad they had come to him, and he would give a bottle of his best wine every week, if such people came to be married. John, not to be behindhand, ordered another bottle equally good; and the stars were again shining in the sky, when

after a very hearty leavetaking, the fine black horse went quickly off with the happy pair.

At the present time Ulric and Freneli enjoy all the happiness of untroubled love and growing prosperity. Their good name is spread far and wide; they are esteemed by every one for their excellent conduct, and they aspire to yet higher praise, that their names may be written in heaven.

But this was not accomplished in a day; they had many a hard struggle before they attained to an even path and a steady aim, of which perhaps, if the reader cares to hear, he may yet be told a little in the summer days.[1]

[1] [The reference is to the second part of the story, published by Gotthelf a few years later: see above, pp. xxxiv., 343.]

APPENDIX

"FRANCESCA'S BOOK:"

A DRAWING-ROOM LECTURE

(1883)

"FRANCESCA'S BOOK"

A DRAWING-ROOM LECTURE

[From the *Spectator*, *June* 19, 1883[1]]

Professor Ruskin, to please some of his friends who could not obtain admission to his Oxford lectures, repeated to them this week, in a private house at Kensington, much of what he had said as Slade Professor on the merits of Miss Kate Greenaway;[2] but he gave his hearers, besides, the pleasant surprise of finding in Miss Francesca Alexander, some of whose drawings were exhibited, an artist whom we may take to be a good exemplar of Professor Ruskin's lifelong teaching. Slightly altering their application to Miss Greenaway, his words express so well what these drawings appear to us to do, that we venture to quote them:—"The beauty of them is being like. They are blissful just in the degree that they are natural; and the fairyland" (or, in Miss Alexander's case, the spiritual land) "she creates for you is not beyond the sky, nor beneath the sea, but nigh you, even at your doors. She does but show you how to see it and how to cherish. Long since I told you this great law of noble imagination. It does not create, it does not even adorn: it does but reveal the treasures to be possessed by the spirit."[3]

And these drawings by "Francesca" go far, by their power of truth and grace, to reveal to us Professor Ruskin's meanings. They show us wherein his magic lies, and partly explain to us the spell by which he binds all who acknowledge him as a teacher. The opening words of his lecture express the sympathy which exists between his delight in "whatsoever is lovely" and "Francesca's" expression of peasant life and wild-flower beauty in their fairest forms. "I have never until to-day," he said, "dared to call my friends and my neighbours together to rejoice with me over any recovered good or rekindled hope. Both in fear and much thankfulness, I have done so now; yet, not to tell you of any poor little piece of upgathered silver of my own, but to show you the fine gold which has been strangely trusted to me, and which before was a treasure

[1] [Reprinted thence in *Igdrasil*, and again in the privately-issued *Ruskiniana*, pp. 238–239. The lecture was given on Tuesday, June 5, at the house of Mrs. Bishop in Prince of Wales' Terrace. A shorter notice of the lecture appeared in the *Academy* of November 19, 1898, and was thence reprinted in *St. George*, vol. ii., 1899, pp. 55–57.]

[2] [That is, in the fourth of his lectures on *The Art of England* (Vol. XXXIII.).]

[3] [See *Art of England*, § 121.]

hid in a mountain field of Tuscany; and I am not worthy to bring it to you, and I can't say what I feel about it, and am only going to tell you simply what it is and how it came into my hands, and to leave you to have your joy of it."

In the first part of the address the Professor roused his listeners, as he alone knows how, to sympathy with Miss Greenaway's genius, supporting his admiration of her "minuteness and delicacy of touch carried to its utmost limit" by a quotation from M. Chesneau's volume on *La Peinture Anglaise*.[1] Then Professor Ruskin, with earnest words, spoke of the idyllic English landscape in Miss Greenaway's drawings. "Would you wish me," said the critic of the ideal life, not less than he is the critic of modern art, "with professorial authority to advise her that her conceptions belong to the dark ages, and must be reared on a new foundation? or is it conceivable to *you* that perhaps the world we truly live in may not be quite so changeable as you have thought it—that all the gold and silver you can dig out of the earth are not worth to you the kingcups she gave you of her grace—and that all the fury and the flutter and the wistfulness of your lives will never discover for you any other than the ancient blessing, 'He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters; He restoreth my soul'?"[2]

The canons of taste which he declared in his lecture[3]—canons so well known that we need not discuss their adequateness—were very remarkably illustrated in twenty drawings in pen and ink by Miss Alexander, an artist,

[1] [*Art of England*, §§ 113, 114.]

[2] [*Ibid.*, § 120.]

[3] [Some idea of this unreported portion of the lecture may be gathered from the following passages in Ruskin's MS. notes:—

"The History of Art after the Fall of Greece is that of the Obedience and Faith of Christianity. [See *Art of England*, § 26.]

"The Obedience, I have said, before the Faith, because there is a great mass of most precious art of which the beauty was reached merely by observance of the moral law in the life and heart, without any religious sentiment of definite kind; for instance, there are a series of drawings at Oxford in the Botanical Museum, which may be set absolutely beside Miss Alexander's, in all points of truth and tenderness, and moreover have the charm of colour:—but drawings of that quality mean the devotion of life to its purpose with a monk's simplicity—if not with a monk's self-consciousness. The man who did them—they are the originals of the plates in Sibthorp's *Flora Græca*—never so much as signed his name. They mean the absolute modesty, contentment, serenity of affection, perpetuity of effort, which are in such temperament its perfect virtue. But in higher walks of art, and in the persons who are [represented by] it, the obedience and the Faith must be together—and here, in the close of the nineteenth century, you find them after all trial and question, emerging, and with a power, which seems to me, more evident, more marvellous, more definitely Heaven-born, and God-helped, than in any former period of the Church's history.

"The same lesson is given us, but in a far deeper and fuller measure, by the wonderful book of which I have the privilege of showing you some of the principal leaves to-day."

For the drawings for Sibthorp's *Flora Græca*, see Vol. XXV. p. 498 *n.*, and Vol. XXVIII. p. 265.]

we believe, until Mr. Ruskin's recent Oxford lectures, unknown in England. Since Leonardo da Vinci's flower studies, we can recall no drawings of the "herb of the field" equal to "Francesca's" for strength and delicacy, for truth, and the reverence that comes of truth; though she has perhaps somewhat to learn in expressing human form. From an *improvisatrice* of the Tuscan villages Miss Alexander received most of the legends and hymns which have suggested her drawings, and which have been collected by her during many years of constant intercourse with the Tuscan *contadini*. They are the sparks which have kindled her imagination and given life to her skill. They remind us, in their innocent freshness, of the *Fioretti* which, six centuries ago, gathered round the memory of St. Francis. The illustrations of "La Madonnina" visiting, with St. Joseph and her Child, the gipsy's cottage, in four designs,[1] are perhaps the most charming of the drawings which were shown to his friends by Mr. Ruskin; and of them, we may select the group which illustrates Mary's words to her humble hostess, as specially full of true sentiment. Of the Divine Child she says, and the drawing declares:—

"Figlio è dell' Eterno Padre,
Come Dio di maestade,
E como uomo; e figlio mio,
Per sua mera cortesia."[2]

We know no modern design comparable to this for meaning and grace, unless it be one by the same artist, of a Tuscan woman sitting;[3] and the study of the daisy-plant which illuminates the text is worthy of the main figures. "Francesca's" book deserves, as it is to have, publication; and we trust that before long these twenty drawings may be available to the public, not only because of their intrinsic excellence, but as they are a commentary on much of Professor Ruskin's teaching, and are a presage of hope for a future art that may possess the qualities for which he now looks to Pre-renaissance centuries. The Tuscan legends, no doubt, had large part in the spiritual suggestiveness and the singular sweetness which give their charm to Miss Alexander's conceptions. The radiance she evokes from the simplest visible things makes belief in what is not seen easy. The faith of the Tuscan peasant guides, perhaps unconsciously to herself, her accurate design; and she reveals more than she may herself know of what her "Holy Family,"[4] her "St. Christopher," and even her lovely "Tuscan Woman," truly mean to those who, shutting out the nineteenth-century glare, study them in earnest and in quiet.

Meantime, they aptly hit the special mark in drawing at which Professor Ruskin teaches his disciples to aim. They illustrate the dictum that all the magic and power of art are in its truth to nature, as nature was created by the Great Artist. The fidelity of "Francesca's" drawing in black and

[1] [Three of the four are Plates XIII.–XV. in this volume.]
[2] [See Plate XIV.]
[3] [Probably the portrait of Isabella: Plate X.]
[4] [Presumably the first of the "Madonna and the Gipsy," not given by Ruskin; leaf 15 in the synopsis (above, p. 45).]

white forces many complex and far-reaching truths on us, and proves once more that very simple means are adequate to rouse in us the highest emotions, when used in good faith by genius of "good will."

All Professor Ruskin's friends must be glad to see how well his Oxford work has agreed with him. He has gifts of insight and power of reaching the best feelings and highest hopes of our too indifferent generation, which are very rare. Agree or disagree with some of his doctrines as we may, he constrains the least hopeful of his listeners to remember that man is not yet bereft of that "breath of life" which enables him to live in spiritual places that are not yet altogether depopulated by the menacing army of physical discoverers.

END OF VOLUME XXXII

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